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D.P. Chattopadhyaya

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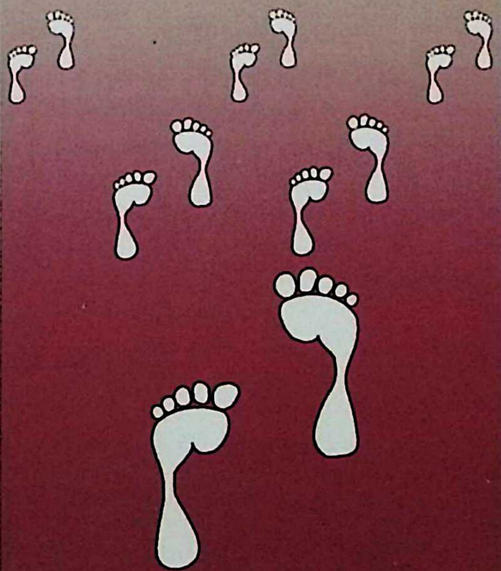

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ARTICLES

Luca Maria Scarantino

Violence and Cultural Dialogue: Generosity as an Epistemic Feature*

With regard to philosophical categories, the problem of violence is associated with the issue of realism and of the conditions of valid representation. (In other words I am here affirming the epistemic nature of violence and, in general, of all behavioural strategies through which intersubjectivity is realized, including of course cultural dialogue.) Husserl's phenomenology has taught us to practise suspension, or *epodiè,* of immediate judgement. This especially complex concept should not be understood as a suspension of belief, but rather as a denial of the absoluteness of valid representation: the representation is only a functional synthesis of basic perceptions ('hyletic data') or complex gestaltic units. Whereas the classical metaphysical tradition allocated an absolute value to these representations, considering any variation in the *repraesentatio* as an 'error' to be corrected, critical philosophy sees these perceptive syntheses as the product of a historical and operational heritage. Our 'natural attitude' appears as being simply the product of a cultural heritage which our culture has selected throughout its history as particularly suitable (on historically pragmatic grounds) for generating efficient or acceptable behaviour in the natural and social context. This 'critical realism',

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*This paper re-elaborates some elements presented at the Interim World Congress of Philosophy held in Delhi (India) on December 15–18, 2006.

which characterizes phenomenology and contemporary critical thought in general, represented, as everyone knows, a turning-point in the history of philosophy, such that Kant at first saw in it the sign of a new Copernican revolution—indeed an epistemological revolution. It also constitutes the theoretical and epistemic frame of our discourse.

We all know that the principles of knowledge, the logical and perceptive (epistemic) assumptions, form what is known in philosophy as the 'transcendental subject' of knowledge. In the history of western thought this subject has been conceived either substantially, as a corpus of beliefs or traditions (therefore, eventually, as a *Sittlichkeit* or ethicity in Hegel's sense), or else as a formal network of transcendental structures. 'Metaphysical realism' represents the former. This major tradition in western philosophical culture attributed a 'natural', thus absolute value to perceptive syntheses that expressed a limited set, or some limited sets of immediate perceptions. In other words the subject of knowledge (which was not necessarily empirical or psychological, but always had some kind of determinacy) raised particular empirical determinations to absolute criteria of knowledge—any other form of representation being dismissed as error, deviance or heresy. I shall not insist on this point.

Transformation of the transcendental subject into a formal network of perceptive, cognitive and intentional a priori is the chief feature of the phenomenological and critical tradition. Revision of Kant's doctrine of categories, carried through by late nineteenth century neo-Kantian schools, particularly in Marburg, opened the way for the possibility of a historicization of the transcendental, which was and still is at the heart of contemporary epistemological concerns. But what concerns us here is another aspect of the problem: the fact that only a functional legalization of experience may produce categories capable of universalizing single pragmatic experiences *(Erlebnisse* or *expériences vécues)*. This gradual liberation of particular experiences subsumes them in a universality that makes possible a free interaction with other individuals, who, on their own, carry other particular and individual experiences. Functional legalization as universalization is the way in which the different experiences can interact, rather than being judged and constrained to adapt to a pre-formed reality. I am not attempting here a technical description of how this functional legalization of experience works, particularly through postulation of an antinomic structure of knowledge and the intentional nature of transcendental ideas. What I wish to stress is that it does not replace the immediate determination of the given with a metaphysical determination. The liberating effect of operational, transcendental philosophies (may I quote empiricism and pragmatism) lies in this functional universalization of original *Erlebnisse.* They release us from our intuitive rootedness and allow creation of a common shared experience, stripped of the original attachment to specific *Erlebnisse,* to a concrete *finiteness* that renders other *finitenesses* incomprehensible and remote. Lived experience is transposed on to a transcendental plan where it can be developed in common and—to borrow an expression from a great Italian philosopher—give rise to discussion rather than dogma, consultation rather than coercion, persuasion rather than violence (G. Preti, DFS (1951), pp. 117–18).

The opposition between persuasion and violence would not surprise us. This common plan of communication and elaboration of our experiences is the public and historical moment of the *formation of meaning.* In releasing the intuitive level from its determinateness through a system of transcendental ideas, reason projects the different and particular pragmatic experiences into a relational framework of ideas. It is at this higher level that the different individual intuitions can interact together, participate and alter the shared heritage which is the transcendental subject. To borrow a phrase from the sociology of action, it is through this possibility of transcendental interaction (formal and intentional) that the *cognitive trust* needed to establish the social bond is generated.

Without this rational elevation, this rational universalization of experience, interaction is blocked. Fixing representation in an ontological determination means interrupting any evolution of our category legalization of experience. That is the authoritarian origin of moralism: transcendental universality is reduced to one or a few of its specific determinations by introducing an abstract norm that claims to apply to the whole of the real. Reality is no longer conceived as an evolutionary process, but rather as a dogmatic set of fixed representations. Pragmatic diversity is forced into a dogmatic legalization, and the theoretical (or moral) hypostases of one of its moments rule over the whole of experience.

The epistemic roots of violence lie then in a substantialization of the formal and intentional structures of knowledge. To reduce the transcendental plan to a substantial concreteness means cutting off the development of the interaction and meaning formation. Authoritarian imposition arises out of this act of prevarication. At the same time, social cohesion is destroyed. Public participation and exchange are erased in favour of an enforced compliance with norms imposed from above. The individual is no longer an actor in the social process but becomes a mere passive receiver—what Michel Wieviorka has called a 'floating subject'. Philosophically this might be expressed in terms of a substantialization of the transcendental subject. The moral and epistemic roots of violence lie in this negation of the shared, universal plan of rationality in favour of one or some of its specific determinations. Such a refusal, such an obliteration, expresses the refusal to carry our arguments and those of our interlocutor on to a level of dynamic universality that allows them to interact and modify one another. It also expresses fear of change and the irrational desire to stay clinging to our individual determinations and our fixed identity. It is a fence thrown up against the interlocutor, an authoritarian reduction of rationality to one of its particular moments, an imposition of our individual experience, our will, choices and prejudices.

So, it is a functional rather than metaphysical constitution of the objectivities we require in order to bring about a free and rational interaction between individuals who share different value systems. 'Respecting the right to criticize, object and collaborate is not a cliché: it means the possibility of understanding each other and, before that, of expressing ourselves on a shared level of intersubjectivity: 'my dignity as a human being and as a citizen comes from accepting a wider egoity', writes the Italian philosopher Giulio Preti in 1957 (*Praxis ed empirismo,* p. 49). Doing away with that intersubjective level means reducing others to silence, stopping them from speaking, imposing our view of things rather than moving it on to the plane of social interactions. Thus violence is first of all excluding others from the social process of meaning formation, unilaterally reducing interaction, blocking and clamping down on the socialization process.

Through this epistemic constitution of intersubjectivity, philosophical thinking thus shows it has a part to play in cultural action that aims to prompt dialogic approaches to modes of interpersonal exchange. I have attempted to show elsewhere that this situation is related to what is normally called a 'morality of resentment', a particular type of moral conformism closely associated with the dogmatism of reason and with a 'communal', therefore identitarian, type of discourse, where individual assent is no longer rooted in an individual, free and rational judgement, but is based on the conditioning emerging from a concrete, specific human group. I will not recall this point further, except to underline that in a dogmatic approach assent becomes entirely defined within the limited horizon of a social and value system. The criterion of operational verifiability is replaced by the criterion of acceptability within the *ethos* of a human group. The stances we adopt take their legitimacy from the recognition they receive within a concrete group. This social determination generates that particularly powerful kind of conformism called the *consensus gentium (doxa)*, which prevents the individual from taking up any position that might diverge from the dominant direction of the concrete group he or she belongs to. Assent is no longer a tool of knowledge, it becomes an instrument of social positioning.

Thus the truth criterion is no longer inherent within the discourse, it comes from the *auctoritas* of a group, from its *doxa*. As for morality, this means refusing all dialogic interaction, no matter how conflictual it might be, in favour of a sectarian logic, expressing particular interests opposed to the general interest rather than integrating into it. This identitarian drift causes a shattering of social cohesion and generates closed groups, barely related to each other and with a strong identity centre. Because they do not interact, these groups are impoverished; the flow of exchange of experiences dries up and the social fabric deteriorates. The conditions in which these situations come about probably fall within the domain of the various human sciences, those of society and nature; but the cluster of fundamental epistemic modalities underlying them is by right part of philosophy's domain.

So we are led to the issue of the 'dialogue between cultures', or civilizations, much debated nowadays. The historical nature of the principles of knowledge determines both the liberating power of rationality and its very limits. In this regard we could mention a 'situated transcendental' *(un transcendantal situé)*. The concrete historicity of the transcendental gives rise to different systems at the formal level, but more especially at the level of transcendental ideas (the sphere of *culture* in the anthropologists' sense).[1] The diversity of cultures is a necessary consequence of the historical determination of the transcendental subject. But we must beware of any *universalism* of reason that affirms the primacy of one transcendental system over others: each intentional system corresponds to historical intentionalities, which proceed from and attempt to respond to historical needs and to the concrete history of the civilization that produced them. Knowledge is never 'radical', it always presupposes a social context and an intersubjective community where discourse develops concretely. But on the other hand we need to avoid any *culturalist*, *communal* or *communitarian* orientation: on the contrary, the open (formal) character of the transcendental plan protects us from any crystallization of ethical systems. The inherent antinomy of transcendental ideas or intentionalities means that we can go beyond conflicts between intentionalities by generating new intentionalities and getting on to a 'further level' (a morphogenesis or *Aufliebung)*. In other words, we must avoid reducing the plurality of transcendental ideas to historically determined ethical systems. This kind of cultural *relativism,* which I personally reject, would situate all interaction between cultures at the level of their ethical systems, thus denying it by appealing to a 'respect between cultures' which in fact is simply a 'respect between ethics'. Interaction, exchange between cultural systems can and must take place on the transcendental level of intentionalities of knowledge rather than at the already crystallized level of *habitus*. Any attempt to situate it at the level of ethics would be a snare destined to end in the impossibility of true dialogue, and in communal or 'multiculturalist' consequences. It was precisely by identifying culture with a human group's 'set of acquired forms of behaviour', that is, thanks to an identification between culture and ethics, that Samuel Huntington developed his theory of a clash of civilizations. Any cultural relativism, insofar as it is based on an identification between ethics and culture, can only constitute the most radical negation of an interaction between cultures, since that very interaction is blocked before it can reach the level of universality which alone makes it possible. It is on the level of pragmatic interaction, the level of *concrete behaviours* that the diversity, affinities, compatibility or incompatibility between cultures are measured: and it is through behaviours that the success of cultural mediations can be measured. Indeed the axiological dynamic shows analogies with the Kuhnian dynamic between scientific paradigms. Like theoretical truth, the validity of values is a-chronic: 'the phenomenological relationship between act and value, between value and object assessed is an a-temporal relationship, because it is intrinsic' (G.P., SDR, p. 210). But on the other hand 'we are faced with the historical experience of the diversity of scales of value, or at least their hierarchies' *(ibid.)*. Above all, and this is a crucial point, as scientific systems always interact at the level of basic experience, similarly interaction between different moral and transcendental systems (or, if you will, differently structured transcendental subjects) always takes place at the level of behaviours. Their transformation results nevertheless from the transcendental level of the ideas of reason, the level of the intentionalities that constitute knowledge or, if you wish, the level where cultural forms are constituted. For behaviours to become structurally compatible, and not only occasionally reconciliated, it is essential to bring their generating levels, the formal structures of legalization of experience to a degree of compatibility, i.e. of integration.

Practices like stoning or infibulation are not likely to be eliminated simply by preaching about what is right and what is wrong, or by opposing the value systems those practices came from with other systems equally closed, but rather by intervening on the deepest level of meaning of such practices, in the same way as the secularization process experienced by western culture challenged the very foundation of our knowledge and beliefs, including of course religious beliefs and precepts. Here is a particularly complex and elaborated task, which needs to tackle the very roots of a way of life and of a culture: otherwise we risk to incur a radicalization of positions which, since it is associated with group beliefs and practices, is likely to trigger communal defence mechanisms. Here is the role of philosophy as *paideia.* And, on the other hand, an intellectual exercise unable to achieve any effect on social practice and ethos would be utterly pointless—it would be philosophy abdicating from its cultural and social scope.

So, in the end intercultural dialogue can only take place at the formal, open level of hierarchies of values, rather than at the historically crystallized level of ethical systems. Such articulations of moral values evolve in an similar way as the formal intentionalities of knowledge. While in contemporary thought we owe to Max Scheler the discovery of a hierarchy of values in the moral organization of the emotional *hyle,* I claim we should abandon his work insofar he suggests to give an objective value to moral (emotional) intuition. Such intuitionism would immediately involve a rigid conception of the hierarchy of values. Yet there is no universal basis for values, but rather a diversity of organizations or hierarchies of values challenging one's responsibility, which arises from a continuing and pragmatic choice between conflicting values. But this choice rests on an epistemic legalization of experience and we can state that the moral structures of action are a function of the epistemic structures of analysis or legalization of experience.

'Non piu la tuna è cielo a noi, die noi alia luna': such was Giordano Bruno's conclusion after his analysis of the omnipresence of the

divine. When pragmatic behaviours conflict, we must go back to the root level of transcendental intentionality to develop fresh normative systems that will in their turn generate new and compatible pragmatic behaviours. The idea of a historical determinateness of the transcendental subject of knowledge, the idea of its historicity, far from leaning towards an ethical relativism or communal demands, fits with a dialogic conception of the interaction between moral systems: 'moral intuition varies from one population to another, one generation to another, one individual to another and sometimes even within a single individual. For these many and diverse intuitions to be recognized as "moral", we must accept a principle which, on the one hand, is a universal idea historically embodied in one or other of those ethical intuitions and which, and, on the other hand, forms the criterion that lets us assess each of these intuitions as an "ethical" intuition whose positivity we accept, and even assert (...). The pure idea of morality is transcendental, and therefore irreducible to any empirical concretization whatsoever' (G.P., AS, pp. 19–21). No need to add that the universality of human rights attempts precisely to express this fundamental constitutive level: through the basic notions of the dignity and liberty of the person, the human rights represent the conditions of possibility for every value system, for every open *morality*, to be fulfilled. As such, they are immanent, embedded in the different value systems. But they also express a task, since they do not authorize all moral systems: any system enclosed within a rigid ethical corpus will end in a conflict with this fundamental constitutive level. To some extent, one of the major tasks of human right would be to reveal the how aporetic dogmatic, therefore authoritarian, systems of values are.

Moral attitude does not recognize any closure, either as to individuals or value systems. On the contrary, because of its formal nature, its emptiness, the transcendental subject allows an infinity of contents. Its formal nature entails freedom because a critique may be undertaken from within, a self-criticism of the ethical systems and bodies of belief that succeed each other historically. It contains an inherent capacity for self-criticism, because the cultural fabric in which it is immanent, common sense, is not a corpus of substantial content (as George Moore's school thought) but expresses the functional (formal) modes of acquisition of pragmatic experiences, the gestaltic syntheses of our natural attitude as they evolve historically. As such, freedom is not a condition for the possibility of history, it is a gradual conquest of culture. It is because western philosophy has learnt to think of knowledge as a formal process of resolving experience, as a functional universalization of intuitive experiences *(Erlebnisse)*, that it has been able to escape from a closed corpus of beliefs, precepts and dogmas. But that culture is still a battlefield between formal knowledge, with the free, open morality that goes with it, and dogmatic knowledge with its authoritarian moralism. The history of freedom is the history of the gradual affirmation of a transcendental legalization of experience as against an epistemology of *adaequatio*.

Finally, when we talk of interaction, whether between cultures or individuals, we imply readiness to change ourselves. Bringing our experiences to a shared universality means putting at stake, it means feeding them into a mechanism that is likely to change them utterly. Rationalization of experience forces the empirical subject, individual as well as cultural, to question its concrete form, its configuration and its 'self'. It requires us to be prepared to take hold of our self and our own *flesh*, to force our compulsions and desires, to change our *ego* in the name of the chance to interact and communicate, in the name of a universality of meaning, of a reciprocal understanding therefore, which is the fundamental element of human sociability. Without that readiness to change, without this *generosity* which is not simply a moral feature but a basic epistemic mechanism, no interaction can be possible: there will only be a clash of experiences, a conflict of specific identities desperately clinging to their original determinations. In other words exchange between individuals must work to *construct* personal identities. Personal identities do not pre-exist exchange—unless in a dogmatically hypostasized way—they *result* from exchange. In this way we can build a typically moral concept, generosity or *charity*, as a fundamental epistemic mechanism[2] and also claim that a revision in a transcendental—or critical—direction of the philosophical construction of knowledge might contribute significantly to the analysis of many key concepts in the social sciences.

ENDNOTES

1. Conceiving culture as the set of transcendental ideas or intentionalities is the way in which philosophy is able to define the concept of culture in an operational way. Identification between culture and ethics is here rejected.
2. From a very different perspective and in other contexts we find the same strategy in the Confucian notion of *jen* (benevolence), which arrives at the same epistemic basis for moral values.

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P. George Victor

Is Indian Philosophy—A Philosophy or Theology

A study of Indian philosophy reveals that there is something new, and something different from what has been explained as philosophy, since the times of ancient Greeks. There was also a criticism that "theories of Oriental peoples— the Hindus, Egyptians, Chinese ... are not thoroughgoing systems of thought..."[1] Being aware of these facts, historians of Indian philosophy have tried their best to assert theirs as something to be called 'philosophy'. In this context the present paper is not simply something that oriented how the Indian scholars and others viewed and interpreted Indian philosophy, but it discusses elaborately and interestingly the way in which the Indian philosophy proceeded, and what it ought to be. Therefore, the purpose of writing this is to find out the actual meaning, definition and method of words like religion, theology and philosophy of English language, and again the Indic words such as *darsana* and *anviksiki* of Sanskrit language. Histories of philosophies of West and India are examined thoroughly with reference to their spirit, content, subject matter and common features.

What is Philosophy?

A keen study of the books written in the name of Indian philosophy reveals that there was something new, and something different from what has been explained as philosophy starting from the ancient Greeks. The word 'philosophy' and its spirit, if applied to the books of Indian philosophy, is impossible to understand for a person, who has been already in touch with the beginning of philosophy either as a student or teacher, and to reconcile with the title 'Indian Philosophy' which content and spirit described in their pages differ from the definition of philosophy.

Though it seems unnecessary, but it is essential to remember that, the word 'philosophy' is a derivative of the Greek term '*philein-sophia'*, which denotes 'to love-wisdom'. Etymologically it is "the love of exercising one's curiosity and intelligence."[2] It is evident from the Greek thinkers that philosophy is the test of critical reasoning that proceeds by criticizing the received opinions. Accordingly the philosopher's task is to examine assumptions critically. Being aware of this nature of philosophy, the famous writer of the history of philosophy, Frank Thilly in his book *A History of Philosophy* has made it clear that "the theories of Oriental peoples—the Hindus, Egyptians, Chinese ... are not thoroughgoing systems of thought...."

Again being aware of these same facts, Indian historians of Indian philosophy have tried their best to assert theirs as something to be called 'philosophy'. Donald H. Bishop has summarised, how the Indian scholars and others viewed and interpreted Indian philosophy, in his prologue to *Indian Thought*, edited by him in 1975. Recently an Indian scholar living in America, Professor R. Puligandla has discussed elaborately and interestingly the way in which the Indian philosophy proceeds.[3]

Histories of Philosophy Compared

As far as the histories of philosophy are concerned, the following are the popular books spread to all the continents:

B.A.G. Fuller, *A History of Philosophy,* 1938.
Bertrand Russell, *History of Western Philosophy,* 1945.

Further, the different volumes produced by Copleston, S.J. and the book of Fredrick Mayer, *A History of Modern Philosophy,* 1951 are of immense value for understanding what philosophy is. All these books discuss about the different perspectives and problems analysed by various great thinkers of Europe and America. The above writers narrated the history of philosophy by taking a thinker and by presenting his philosophy.

With reference to Indian philosophy, a number of books have been written; and the following are some popular books:

S.N. Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy,* February, 1922.
S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy,* November, 1922.
M. Hiriyanna, *Outlines of Indian Philosophy,* 1932.
Chandradhara Sarma, *A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy,* 1952.
R. Puligandla, *Fundamentals of Indian Philosophy,* 1985.
P. Nagaraja Rao, *Fundamentals of Indian Philosophy.*

All these academic writers have discussed the subject matter in their respective books by tracing a school of thought with its origin, development and expansion. The subject matter is represented through a system or as a system in a separate unit wherein the founder and followers find place.

Philosophy in the West and in India

A careful reading of the above books of the West and India will make us to draw the following assertions about philosophy.

1) The philosopher of the West is a thinker himself alone though he has inherited the past. He discusses the past but applies his reason to it and arrives at his own conclusion. His thought is purely individualistic and based upon his own intellect.
2) On the other hand, the thinker of India is not individualistic but social and traditional, in the sense that he accepts his predecessor's arguments mostly and thereby advances his interpretation in support of them with new insights.
3) The history of Western philosophy "is the story of the development of reasoned human thought from its earliest

beginnings down to the present time,"[4] whereas Indian philosophy reflects different systems followed by a tradition or justification.

4) The philosophy of the West reflects upon nature, society and universe, and tries to formulate theories on the basis of reason alone. On the contrary, the Indian systems derive their inspiration on the basis of a *sastra* (scripture).
5) Mostly Western philosophy is a critical reflection on everything without bringing the notion of God; but Indian philosophy moves around God, and discusses everything with reference to that great God or *Brahman*.
6) Philosophy in the West is an analysis of the fundamental concepts or it is a reasoned criticism of the fundamental beliefs in the field of metaphysics, epistemology and ethics. But the texts of Indian philosophy do not contain such a reasoned criticism of the beliefs and concepts. On the other hand the founders and followers of various schools in Indian philosophy questioned the very power of human intellect and empirical experience.
7) While Western philosophy relates to the human predicament in between birth and death, the Indian schools of thought connect their analysis to the state or life after death.
8) Philosophy is opposed to religion and authority; but books on Indian philosophy contain nothing but religion followed by justification.
9) Philosophy does not mean "a method or way of life" with reference to practices or rituals. The history of Western philosophy reveals that philosophy is "a way of looking at things" on the basis of human intellect and empirical experience. In other words, philosophy is not a way of life but a reasoned way of knowing things and the universe.

Nature of Philosophy in the West and in India

The philosopher found in the history of philosophy as expounded by Western writers is a man crowned with reason and travels in the world of ideas; while the expounders of the Indian systems of thought accustomed to customs aiming the world-beyond. The philosopher of the West invents and creates, while the thinker, who was considered a sage or *risi* of India borrows. The former is independent of his views and the latter respects the earlier origins and a dependent. Any prominent thinker or philosopher of the West, for example Plato, Aristotle or Kant, Hegel and Marx, took the help of human reason and empirical experience for their arguments, analysis of ideals and conception of ethics. While examining the past, every philosopher stands fresh and projects new perspectives of understanding ideas and ideals. They never bowed their heads before either authority or perpetuated dogmas, nor resorted to the Holy Scriptures for support. From philosopher to philosopher the scope and arena may be different but everywhere his critical reflection is projected.

The greatest of Modern philosophy, Immanuel Kant, either to formulate his theory of knowledge or to discuss his principle of categorical imperative, has neither accepted his predecessor's analysis nor admitted authority. But contrary to the spirit of philosophy, the schools of Indian philosophy present their thought either on the basis of the sayings of a teacher or on the authority of a scripture. The greatest of *acaryas*, teachers in India of ancient times Sankara has formulated and established the *Advaita* as the central doctrine of the Vedanta. And much of his interpretation refers to ancient scriptures including *sruti* and *smrti* literature. Many schools paved an ethical code of life on the basis of either custom or scriptures but not on the basis of the application of critical reason with a fresh outlook. They have advocated prescriptions and model life based on their own tradition. The system builders in India or sages used concrete examples for un-concrete things; and made it a method for knowing things in the form of analogies. This comparison proves that the philosopher of the West is totally different from the sage of India. Accordingly the spirit of the so-called Indian philosophy is different from that of the Western philosophy.

The Title is Philosophy, but the Content Differs

(Content without Title or Title without Content)

In all the texts of Indian philosophy, the most accepted systems or schools are six plus three; they are: Nyaya-Vaisesika, Samkhya-Yoga, Mimamsa-Vedanta of the Vedic tradition and Jainism, Buddhism and Carvakas of the anti-Vedic tradition. Significantly the historians of Indian philosophy have narrated in their books about these nine systems approximately, though some differ. Among the series of the histories of Indian philosophy especially S.N. Dasgupta's book contains two different chapters on the philosophy of *Vedas.* M. Hiriyanna's book, which came later, contains a special chapter on the *Bhagavad-Gita.* Later Chandradhara Sharma, in his book, included various schools of Vedanta, and also *Saiva* and *Sakta* schools. The later versions of Indian philosophy written by various scholars depict more or less the same information.

But to our surprise, some other writers with different titles or names also dealt with the same content. For example, Monier Williams, *Religious Thought and Life in India,* which was published in London in 1883, includes the six systems of Indian philosophy excluding Jainism and Buddhism. Similarly, *The Religions of India* by Edward Washburn Hopkins, which was published in July 1894, includes Jainism and Buddhism apart from Vedic thought. Like that *Sources of Indian Tradition* compiled by Theodore de Bary and others also contains a lot of information about what we discuss generally in Indian philosophy. *The Indian Mind* edited by Charles A. Moore comprises some aspects of Indian philosophy and culture. This book discusses the subject matter with reference to problems and concept-wise but not system-wise. Again another book edited by Donald H. Bishop, *Indian Thought* deals with the content with reference to schools, concepts and thinkers. There is another book, which should not be forgotten, and which discussed the schools and religions of Indian philosophy is Swami Prabhavananda's book *The Spiritual Heritage of India* assisted by Fredrick Manchester.

A glance at these titles or the study of them reveals that the subject matter is same but the titles are many varying 'Indian

Philosophy', 'Indian Tradition', 'Indian Mind', 'Indian Thought', or 'Religions of India', 'Spiritual Heritage of India', and 'Religious Thought'. The doubt arises now, is that which title exactly suits to the content? Earlier it is maintained that what we call Indian philosophy does not suit or correspond to the actual meaning and content of the word 'philosophy'. Therefore, again the problem arises that is it 'thought' or 'tradition', 'mind' or 'Spiritual Heritage', or something related to religions. The titles themselves lead us to doubt the very authenticity of Indian philosophy to call it philosophy as such.

Common Features of Indian Philosophy

According to many Indian scholars, there have been certain general principles or common themes in all the different schools of Indian philosophy; as such the nature of Indian philosophy has been discussed in the introductory chapter of their books. The first authentic historian of Indian philosophy, Dasgupta considers that the following are some fundamental points:[5]

1) Except Carvakas (materialists) all other schools have elucidated the 'religious purpose of life' and thereby realization of it.
2) All the schools of Indian philosophy accept the casual theory of actions and their respective fruits, according to which the relation between actions and their results are not limited to one single life of a person but also to the next assumed births. This is called *Karma* theory. Buddhism and Jainism have also maintained this view of life in their own ways.
3) It is believed that *moksa* or liberation is the *summum bonum* of life. It is a peaceful destination of rest after the end of the cycle of birth and death.
4) Except Buddhism, all other systems agree that there is a soul in man, which is pure and untouched by all impurities.
5) The schools of Indian philosophy consider this world as something painful; and a means to overcome it have been laid down by all schools in different ways.

6) Practical mode of life or some ethical norms have been prescribed by most of the systems to achieve their respective goals.

S. Radhakrishnan, the author of *Indian Philosophy,* further adds some essentials common to the six systems of Indian philosophy. He writes that:[6]

i) There was a common dialectic of speculation in ancient India; words like *avidya, maya, purusa, jiva* and etc., have permeated the thought of many schools.
ii) All schools have formulated their means of knowledge duly considering intuition, inference and the *Vedas.*
iii) They considered and tried to explain the origin, maintenance and dissolution or modification of the world.
iv) Apart from their assertion of *moksa* and the practical approach to attain it, Radhakrishnan says, the schools insist on individual purity.
v) Lastly, he reminds that these systems admitted in different degrees the rules of caste and stages of life or *varnasramadharmas.*

According to M. Hiriyanna, the leading concepts of Indian philosophy are the ideal of *moksa* and the method of *samnyasa* (renunciation). He writes that these are the two elements common to all the schools of Indian thought for the attainment of *moksa* as the final ideal of life; and therefore the ascetic spirit has been recommended.[7]

The recent writer of Indian philosophy, R. Puligandla has systematically discussed the characteristics common to all the systems of Indian philosophy. According to him "all philosophies of India are philosophies of life."[8] He remarks that all the Indian schools consider human suffering is due to the original ignorance but not to the original sin as conceived in Western religion, i.e., Christianity. In the same spirit all philosophies of India argue that the ultimate aim of life i.e., *moksa* or *nirvana,* is to be attained here in this world and at the same time in the present state of the body.

Is Indian Philosophy a Religion?

Except Carvaka materialism, Buddhism and Jainism, the six systems of Indian philosophy were called 'Six Brahmanical Systems'; and their authors have faith in the *Vedas* and its tradition. The founders of Jainism and Buddhism were called religious masters and considered divine beings or sometimes gods (*devas*); and they preached certain codes of conduct and established orders to preach their thought. Thus a distinct message with a mission is inherent in every system. Further, the founders of the six systems of Brahmanical tradition were not only religious persons, but also their arguments and analysis goes around the divine Being, God and the place of man in the entire divine controlled universe. Many of the founders tried to establish the power of the Supreme Being and the inferior state of man. It seems that the thought, message and content of all these schools related to what we call religion, because the popular view of religion conjoins those systems of Indian philosophy. The *Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* records the definition of religion as follows:

> "Religion is the belief in an everlasting God that is, in a Divine Mind and Will ruling the universe and holding moral relations with mankind."[9]

Though it is clear to understand, what religion is; but the critical analysis of the nature of Indian philosophy presupposes a clear and complete description of the nature of religion. Accordingly, a mention should be made about the features of religion here as stated in the *Encyclopaedia of Philosophy.* They are:[10]

1) Belief in supernatural power or God or mind.
2) Distinction between sacred and non-sacred things.
3) Ritualism focussed towards God or a thing.
4) Moral code sanctioned by God or gods.
5) Different forms of divine communication like prayer, etc.
6) A complete world-view and the place of man in it.
7) Based on these lines a social group or bond emerges.

Most of these features of religion are found in almost all systems of Indian philosophy except Carvakas. To this extent, the writers or historians of Indian philosophy made clear that it is associated with religion and a practical way of life. S.N. Dasgupta maintains that Indian philosophies were not only speculative but have "a deep craving after the realization of the religious purpose of life."[11] M. Hiriyanna remarks that religion and philosophy do not stand separate in India: "whatever else a religion may or may not be, it is essentially a reaching forward to an ideal ... it serves to further right living; and it is only in this sense that we can speak of religion as one with philosophy in India."[12] Chandradhara Sharma points out that the schools of Indian philosophy are religious sects: "Indian philosophy has been intensely spiritual and has always emphasized the need of practical realization of truth ... 'See the self' (*atma va are drastavyah*) is the key note of all schools of Indian philosophy. And this is the reason why most of the schools of Indian philosophy are also religious sects." [13]

Swami Prabhavananda of the Hollywood Centre of Sri Ramakrishna order and the author of *The Spiritual Heritage of India* maintains that Western philosophy relates to abstract reasoning and speculation, while Indian philosophy refer to immediate perception (*darsana*) which cannot be explained with reason. He writes that "Indian philosophy of religion is fundamentally mystic and spiritual", and therefore categorically states it as "Indian religious philosophy."[14]

According to P. Nagaraja Rao, Indian philosophy is an integral approach towards the spiritual realization of man. It is "man-centred and life-centred, ethical discipline and religion."[15] Being spiritualistic it advocates self-purification and practical discipline. Therefore, he remarks it as the philosophy of religion: "Indian philosophy is neither completely a religion nor a philosophy in the Western sense. It is a philosophy of religion."[16]

These statements affirm that Indian philosophy consists of religions. Different titles used by various writers to indicate it provides us the view that they are not unanimous to call it philosophy, on the other hand asserted its religiosity.

Is Indian Philosophy a Philosophy?

If the so-called Indian philosophy is associated with the elements of religion or religious as such, why it has been considered philosophy? And in this context it is appropriate to discuss in which way Indian philosophy can be related to philosophy. It is a fact that Indian philosophy differs in content, approach, method and means. Because a comparison of the histories of Indian philosophy with that of Western or histories of philosophy proves that the so-called Indian philosophy is not philosophy as such. The common features found in the schools of Indian philosophy were not yet all discussed in the realm of philosophy in the West. The West is to be referred to here because we are using a term 'philosophy' which is originated, discussed and considered as a branch of knowledge in the Western countries.

Indian philosophy, being a combination of different schools of Vedic religion or Brahmanic religion apart from the religions of Buddha and Mahavira, further explores the possible ways to meet the challenges of other systems or atheists and thereby ended in speculations, discussions by writing commentaries to the religious texts. Thus in the early centuries of Christian era the schools of different systems of Vedic religion and other religions have landed themselves into a wider arena of religion.

But again it is to be stressed that the two religions plus the six systems of Brahmanic religion or Vedic religion do not concord with what philosophy stands for and to its definition, character and method for the spirit of philosophy is rational and critical submitting every speculation to criticism. The *Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* contains a definition given by John Passmore of Australia National University. He says that "philosophy ... is neither pure speculation nor pure criticism, it is speculation controlled by criticism."[17] Philosophy is an examination of established truths and received opinions. The standard for such an investigation into it is human mind or reason with due consideration for the scientific facts and laws. Therefore, every philosopher formulates his own framework of knowledge and thereby lands in his own arena of philosophical discussion. Hence, in the history of philosophy we find individuals but not systems and schools. Philosophy is not simple thinking; it is critical thinking that does not admit any authority, faith and tradition but critically considers them. Philosophy is a critical way of looking at ideas and notions in and around us, but neither a way of life nor a bundle of facts and figures.

Therefore, according to every philosopher, philosophy is basically that starts from primary ideas of man to the issues of eternity and universality. To assert briefly, philosophy is that which gives rational explanation based upon human reason and empirical observation. It is an intellectual exercise of the ideas and notions that do not yield immediate material results and benefits, but influences basically or provides a basic understanding of the problems about reality and facts of our life. How the principle of reason was emphasized in philosophy has been recorded in the *Dictionary of Philosophy*, for which philosophy is "the rational explanation of anything, the general principles under which all facts could be explained, in the sense, indistinguishable from science."[18]

Reason, human intellect and their empirical bearing predominates in philosophy, but these aspects of human reason do not find a place in the schools of Indian philosophy. Then it is to state that the subject matter that usually comprises in Indian philosophy does not come under the name of philosophy as the six systems (*sad-darsanas*) do not give importance to reason or human intellect and empirical validity.

What is Indian Philosophy? *Darsana*—the Indian Point of View

Leaving aside the discussion let the Indian point of view be taken now: If it is the case, in general, the schools of the so-called Indian philosophy are nine—the six orthodox systems of Brahmanic religion and three heterodox schools. Indian tradition considers these schools into two groups—the *astika* and the *nastika*. The *astika* or orthodox schools are those respect the *Vedas* and are popularly known as six systems or *sad-darsanas*; they are:

1) Nyaya of Gautama,
2) Vaisesika of Kanada
3) Samkhya of Kapila
4) Yoga of Patanjali
5) Mimamsa of Jaimini, and
6) Vedanta of Badarayana

The *nastika* or heterodox schools are those disregards or oppose the *Vedas* and their authority. They are:

1) Buddhism of the Buddha
2) Jainism of Mahavira, and
3) Materialism of Carvakas

Though the historians of Indian philosophy tried to assert that what they wrote and what that contained in the systems is philosophy, they did not yet forget to mention what the Indian tradition and early scholars called it or named it in their own tongue. The term used to indicate the subject matter is *darsana.* This Sanskrit word *darsana* is derived from the root '*drs*' from which also '*drsti*' came. '*Drsti*' means apprehension, and *darsana* refer to direct vision or immediate perception. M. Hiriyanna writes that *darsana* is the direct vision of the ultimate truth but literally it means 'sight'.[19] According to Chandradhara Sharma, "it stands for the direct, immediate and intuitive vision of Reality, the actual perception of truth, and also includes the means which lead to this realization."[20]

For the first time, we see that Haribhadra used the word *darsana* to denote systems of Indian thought of his times. In his work called '*Sad-darsana samuccaya*' or 'compilation of the six systems' he recorded Buddhism, Jainism, Nyayayika, Samkhya, Vaisesika and the Mimamsa systems. It is interesting to note here what Erich Frauwallner writes: "Haribhadra, a Jaina author, who presumably lived in the eighth century AD has presented in short verses ... the six most important systems of his time. Though his statements are only scanty, they have been, however, supplemented by valuable commentaries of late times."[21]

A number of ancient Indian writers of *darsanas* used the word '*sad-darsana*' six *darsanas* to represent their *darsanas.* And though each writer wrote about six *darsanas*, they differed in their selection of systems and estimation of the various *darsanas* of their times.

The *Sad-darsanas* According to Different Ancient Writers

Though the word *Sad-darsanas* refers to six systems, they are different for various writers as indicated below:

Writer	Six Systems
Haribhadra	Buddhism, Jaina, Nyaya, Samkhya, Vaisesika and Mimamsa
Jinadatta	Buddha, Jaina, Samkhya, Mimamsa, Saiva and Nastika
Sri Rajasekhara	Jaina, Samkhya, Vaisesika, Mimamsa, Yoga and Sangala.
	(The above writers are the followers of Jainism)
Mallinadha	Panini, Jaimini, Vyasa, Kapila, Astapada and Kanada.
Jayanta Bhatta	Mimamsa, Nyaya, Vaisesika, Samkhya, Bauddha and Carvaka
Raja Ballalasena	Gautama, Kanada, Kapila, Patanjali, Vyasa and Jaimini

According to an ancient work *Sarvamata Samgraha* the six systems are divided into two groups:

(a) Vaidika mata: Mimamsa, Samkhya & Tarka
(b) Avaidika mata: Bauddha, Arhata & Lokapate.

Another compendium, *Sarvadarsana Samgraha* or "the summary of all systems" which was written by Madhavacarya, had a complete description of all the systems.[22] Examining the text, Frauwallner says:

> "Essentially copious is the work of Sayana Madhava, a Vedanta author of the fourteenth century AD. It not only embraces the important and

> great group of systems but also distinguishes itself by skilful utilization of sources. The arrangement of the material is also exceedingly impressive and lively. The author begins with the presentation of that system which, in his view, is the worst, viz., the system of the materialists, then disproves, advancing from one step to another, one theory by another until finally the system of, which he himself professes, forms the conclusion and the crown, as it were, of the whole book."[23]

The systems described by Madhavacarya in his *Sarvadarsana Samgraha*, are sixteen, starting from Carvaka to Sankara; they are: (1) Carvaka, (2) Bauddha, (3) Arhata, (4) Ramanuja, (5) Purna Prajna, (6) Nakulisa Pasupata, (7) Saiva, (8) Pratyabhijna, (9) Rajesvara, (10) Aulukya, (11) Aksapada, (12) Jaimini, (13) Panini, (14) Samkhya, (15) Patanjali, (16) Sankara. Similarly a number of writers of Vedic tradition have mentioned different systems or schools. Madhusudhana Saraswati of 17th century AD, who was the follower of Advaita Vedanta has divided the systems into orthodox (*astika*) and heterodox (*nastika*) schools in his book, *Prasthanabheda:*

a. *Astika* (Orthodox):Nyaya, Vaisesika, Karma-Mimamsa, Saririka Mimamsa, Patanjali, Pancaratra and Pasupati.
b. *Nastika* (Heterodox): Four schools of Buddhism, Jaina Schools and Carvakas.

Further Madhusudhana Saraswati has also mentioned different doctrines, in his *Siddhanta Bindu*, a commentary on *Dasa Sloke*, such as *atma-vada*, *pratyeka indriyatma vada*, *militendriyatma vada*, *atma mano vada*, and *pranatma vada*. He had also stated about the Madhyamikas, Digambaras and Tarkikas. Again to state another writer of Advaitic tradition of early 18th century, Gauda Brahmananda Saraswati in his *Nyaya Ratnavali*, a commentary on *Siddhantabindu*, maintained the division of orthodox and heterodox systems. In this context Radhakrishnan says that every system helps in its own way to know "some aspect of the truth"; and they were formulated and evolved to meet the demands of reason; he remarks:

> "All logical attempts to gather the floating conceptions of the world into some great general ideas were regarded as *darsanas.*"[24]

Why *Darsanas* are Named Philosophies?

The *darsanas* have been considered, perceived and preserved from ancient times to the present day; and the same pattern and traditional division has been maintained and preserved by the historians of Indian philosophy. When English language dominated the land of India as a medium of instruction in education and administrative set-ups during the British rule, the Indian *darsanas* were dubbed as Indian philosophies. It seems, at first the Europeans introduced the term 'philosophy' for denoting *darsanas.* This was found in the writings of H.T. Cole Brooke, Monier Williams, Max Muller and Paul Deussen. Subsequently it was further carried and justified by Indian writers.

The great Indian intellectuals who came into contact with the subject of philosophy as conceived in the early Greek period and developed in the modern times of Europe, have felt that there is a gap between philosophies as such and what is described in the texts of Indian philosophy. The result is that they advanced in their books on Indian philosophy a thorough discussion on the spirit of Indian philosophy with a justification, though it has an inclination towards religion.

There are two opposed camps and conditions spread to two different centuries for calling *darsanas* as philosophies. The early writers or who named *darsanas* as philosophies were mostly Europeans. They want to know the thought patterns that influenced the Indian life and thinking in order to understand Indians to govern them and rule them. Therefore, a possible English term is given to the *darsanas* in order to teach the systems to the English civil servants of India. To name a few, the remarkable and first researches on the *darsanas* done by H.T. Cole Brooke appeared in the beginning of 19th century, and also in the book form with a title, *Essays on the Religion and Philosophy of the Hindus.* Max Muller's *Six Systems of Indian Philosophy* was published in London in the year 1899.

Similarly at the end of the 19th century came out the *Outlines of Indian Philosophy* by Paul Deussen.

The British had established their sovereignty on Indian soil, their studies in Indian literature, and their knowledge of the Indian continent might have given them the feeling that their religion, Christianity was superior to what that practised in India. Most of them never considered the religion of India as superior or equal to their religion. Paul Deussen, though very much, was a professor of philosophy, but a son of pastor, Adam Deussen; and he was brought up in a Christian faith no doubt. It might have led him to name Indian *darsanas* as philosophies rather than calling them theology. To make it a point, it seems that except Deussen, the other writers' knowledge of Western philosophy was limited for they were not the students of philosophy. Otherwise, they would not have called *darsanas* as philosophies. For example, Sir William Jones was a British judge; Max Muller was a Sanskrit scholar; and Monier Williams an Orientalist. It is to be noted here that the early 19th century thinking in Europe was dominated by a conservative attitude towards philosophy; and philosophy was considered as that of heretic in nature, which was based on feelings, social ideas and irreligious thought.[25]

The Indian historians or writers of Indian philosophy were men of 20th century. They were all well trained in English education either in India or in England. They were students and teachers of philosophy brought up in an academic environment. S.N. Dasgupta, S. Radhakrishnan and Hiriyanna were men of high esteem with academic distinctions. They studied Western philosophy and also Indian *darsanas* as students and teachers in the colleges and universities. Being aware of the spirit of philosophy as such and the content of *darsanas*, they doubted calling *darsanas* as philosophy, but they were not interest to contradict their predecessors, the European writers. Therefore to satisfy their feelings and to meet the demand of reason they tried their level best to assert and rationalize that religion and philosophy are inter-linked in India. This was found in the introductory chapter of each one of their books on the history of Indian philosophy. The books written by S.N. Dasgupta, Radhakrishnan, Hiriyanna and C.D. Sharma have appeared in 1922, 1926, 1932 and 1952 respectively in the 20th century. With its two world-wars, scientific achievements and modern communication, the 20th century thought surpassed the boundaries and beliefs of religion; and ultimately religion lost its appropriate place. The Indian intellectuals who are otherwise writers of *darsanas* in English language might have felt secure in the term 'philosophy' for their *darsanas*, rather than having been called religions.

The beginning of 20th century marked the rise of philosophy in the academic world. The Russian Revolution strengthened the hold of a secular ideology, Marxism against religion. Bertrand Russell became the champion of peace and stood as the great intellectual of the age. In India though some national level public figures claimed the superiority of Indians with reference to culture, way of life and religion but the Hindu elite those who visited England and brought up in English education have not satisfied. Further Christian missionaries with their social work and studies in the comparative religion have always showed and tried to prove the superiority of Christian religion to Hinduism. Probably for these reasons, the Indian writers and scholars felt secure in the term 'philosophy' to call their *darsanas.*

Either the name of any book or the heading of a subject matter should not be based on the conditions of the time but by the content. The English name for the *darsana* should not be given on the basis of popularity with reference to age but to the content in itself. The ancient Indian writers considered their thought and discussion about the reality or truth, right and wrong, faith and reason as '*darsana*'. Professor K. Satchidananda Murty writes accordingly: "*Darsana* is a standpoint. *Darsana* is also the institution of man, nature and God."[26] The central problem in *darsanas* is the place of man in the world created by Almighty God; and various schools draw arguments in support of their tradition. Therefore, it is evident that the word *darsana* has been turned up in English language as philosophy due to historical conditions with a firm belief in their own traditions and religions.

Sanskrit '*Anviksiki*' and English 'Philosophy'

The discussion further leads to think whether there is any term in Sanskrit language that equivalent to the word 'philosophy' or not. Some contemporary scholars believe that there was philosophy in India and in Indian tradition. In this connection a remark made by the leading philosopher of India, Professor K. Satchidananda Murty is worth remembering:

> "It is a curious thing that Sanskrit contains no word exactly corresponding to the word 'philosophy' ... The two words in Sanskrit, which in some degree at least correspond to this word are *anviksiki* and *darsana*."[27]

The passage also indicates that Professor Murty gives preference to *anviksiki* rather than *darsana*. It seems that he does not want to contradict what has been followed earlier, that is why he mentions both *anviksiki* and *darsana*. The word '*anviksiki*' is derived from the word '*anviksa*', which literally means 'after knowledge' (*anu* + *iksa*). '*Anu*' and '*iksa*' may also be translated or at least understood as fundamental substance and desire, i.e., the desire to know the substance or the essence of things. *Anviksiki* and philosophy were identified in meaning and definition by H. Jacobi. Why because he understood, as was mentioned by Kautilya that the word '*anviksiki*' does not give a place for authority and intuitive experience. Professor Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya of *Lokayata* fame has pointed out this:

> "Jacobi's rendering of *anviksiki* as philosophy is thus to be taken with this reservation that Kautilya himself does not allow with his concept of philosophy any place for the alleged mystical, intuitive or scriptural approach to reality."[28]

Kautilya was the greatest scholar of ancient India; in his book *Arthasastra* he divided the branches of knowledge into four: "*Anviksiki*', '*Trayi*', '*Varta*' and '*Dandaniti*'. Here '*Trayi*' means the three which otherwise called the three Vedas, as conceived in ancient times. Kautilya says that '*trayi*' deals with right and wrong; and '*varta*' means trade and commerce, for which Kautilya aptly states as monitory transaction. '*Dandaniti*' is the ethics of punishment that associated with justice and unjust. Apart from these, for Kautilya, '*Anviksiki*' is associated with '*hetu*' or reason. On the basis of this explanation Jacobi renders them as follows:

Anviksiki = Philosophy
Trayi = Theology
Varta = Science of agriculture
Dandaniti = Statecraft

On this Professor Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya remarks as follows:

> "But the more important point about Kautilya is that from his standpoint *anviksiki* is to be clearly differentiated from *trayi* ... Philosophy is not theology—not the knowledge of the scriptures or *Veda*. That is a different 'branch of knowledge', altogether."[29]

Being essentially rational, '*anviksiki*' admits only the data furnished by direct experience and does not mean the mystical-intuitive experience and scriptural authority to reality; therefore, Jacobi rendered '*anviksiki*' as 'philosophy'. The subject matter provides us two basic insights that firstly Kautilya has a sense of respect for reason and secular knowledge as a body of thought; and secondly Jacobi has aptly rendered the word '*anviksiki*' as philosophy, as both are identical in spirit and nature.

In the history of Indian thought, this reasoned, body of thought '*anviksiki*' has been discouraged. Manu and his followers have not considered '*anviksiki*' as a separate branch of knowledge; especially he refers to '*trayi*', '*dandaniti*' and '*varta*' only. Some of the law-givers of ancient time advised that the princes should learn the art of *anviksiki*; those who do not care for the injunctions of law texts were persons of *anviksiki*. The discipline of *anviksiki* is secular and free from authority and tradition. K. Satchidananda Murty writes that persons trained in this discipline entered into endless disputations, criticized everything, and promoted scepticism: "... *anviksiki* was in ancient days considered as the light of all knowledge, the means for achieving all results, and the foundation of all ethics". [30]

The above discussion gives us the conclusion that *anviksiki* is different from Vedic knowledge or what that was connected to *trayi,* i.e., the three Vedas, and further more it is not a '*darsana*'. The meaning and definition of *anviksiki* as conceived in the ancient Indian literature is equivalent to the meaning of 'philosophy' in English language; and therefore *anviksiki* is the right Sanskrit word for philosophy. Philosophy means 'love of wisdom' and *anviksiki* means 'after knowledge'.

Indian *Darsanas* and Their Counterparts in English —Is *Darsana* A Theology?

As the word *anviksiki* is equivalent to the word philosophy, and as it is found that the so-called histories of Indian Philosophy are nothing but the histories of Indian *darsanas,* then what does the word *darsana* mean in English language. The point is, in what way one has to understand *darsana* and what is the right word to denote *darsana* in English is. To answer this point the spirit of Indian *darsanas* should be kept in mind.

As earlier stated the six systems of Indian Philosophy or the whole subject matter of them is somewhat religious in content. These systems were developed by schoolmen and contain certain dogmas of religion; and to that extent certain arguments and doctrines were developed in support of their respective faiths and religious sects. The founders of the systems tried their best to justify the fundamental beliefs of their system or religious sect. Thus for example, Vedanta as a school advances doctrines to meet the challenges of the rational mind of its time. Therefore, the *darsana* is something developed after '*mata*', and tries to make out the doctrines of '*mata*' in a systematic and rational way. The subject matter contained in many systems of the so-called Indian philosophy or *darsana* go around the omnipotent power behind the world. For example, Sankaracarya the chief exponent of Vedanta was considered as the systematiser of the doctrines set forth in the Upanisads. K. Satchidananda Murty categorizes Sankaracarya as "a philosophical theologian" and equated with Thomas Aquinas, the Christian theologian.[31] Though it was remarked unintentionally by Professor Murty, there has been a profound truth in the statement. It implies that the subject matter of Indian philosophy is something theological in spirit and religious in content. Now, let us be clear about the meaning, definition and nature of theology.

The term 'theology' is derived from the Greek words '*theos*' and '*logos*' (God and study) which means the study of God or discourse concerning God. It is defined as follows:

> "Theology is the science which ... correlates, systematizes and organizes the matter of human religious experiences in such a way as to reach a unified body of coherent doctrine, fitted to satisfy the mind's demand for truth and to furnish guidance for the practical life."[32]

But, it could be precisely put in this way:

> "Simply stated, theology is a study of the question of God and the relation of God to the world of reality."[33]

Further, a dictionary of theology carries the definition as follows:

> "Theology means to the 'study of God'. It is that science which deals with the knowledge which man has or can have of God and the divine things."[34]

According to these definitions theology is something that related to God, world, things and human beings; and explains their relation through the divine power. This is what accurately done by Sankaracarya in his commentaries on *prasthana-trayi* while expounding his point of Vedanta. Not only that the later schools of

Buddhism and Jainism, and the other Brahmanical systems as remarked by Radhakrishnan are nothing but the divergent paths or theologies of either heterodox religions or Vedic religion.

Hence, it could be concluded that Indian *darsanas* are nothing but Indian theologies, because the subject matter and spirit of Indian *darsanas* do suit to the definition of theologies of the English language. Therefore, it is the right thing to remove the covers of the books of the so-called histories of Indian philosophy to put a new cover that bears "history of Indian theology." Further, the histories of Indian philosophy are to be called as hereafter the histories of Indian theology. As a new word or an accurate word is inaugurated, it will be wise to know further the meaning and the method of theology for our stand and understanding.

It is said that theology has two broad aspects. Firstly, theology studies the religion in multi-dimensional way, which involves an enquiry into the doctrines and related views, and further tries to ascertain and accurately present those facts. Secondly, it concerns the application of religion in practical sphere. Methodologically speaking theology consists of the following principles:[35]

1) Studies the religious scriptures.
2) Analyzes the doctrines and tries to show a new insight.
3) Seeks to show the human feeling and human involvement in religious experience.
4) Tries to give the proper meaning of the words of the scriptures and interprets them.
5) Synthesis the doctrines, conceptions and ideas in a clear and orderly form those presented at various sections of the scripture or in different texts by various authors.
6) Studies various cults and dogmas, and aims at proper application of them.
7) Criticizes other views, especially those of irreligious or atheistic.
8) Investigates into possible ways to prove the existence and power of God and state of the world.
9) Describes human nature and assets the limited human cognition and inconsistency in human wisdom.

10) Invents the possible methods to propagate irrespective religion and enters into the practical sphere of social laws and procedures.

The proponents of the different schools of Vedanta, Sankara, Ramanuja and Madhva have followed almost all the above principles, which are essentially the characteristics of a theological exercise. The concepts and words analysed by them, the doctrines they evolved, the code of conduct they stressed, the message they propounded—everything is theological in nature rather than philosophical. Hence, there is no point in calling them philosophers; rather they are theologians.

Now the vexed question comes to our mind is why did not the Europeans called the *darsanas* as theologies? I would like to answer the question in the following way: The Europeans perceived 'theology' as holiest. They considered theology as something connected with their religion, Christianity alone. It is interesting to read some lines that affirm the same.

> "Some theologians conceive that of the task of theology is that of setting forth in coherent systematic form the content of that revelation concerning God, the world and man of which the Bible is the inspired record."[36]

Further, if we look into the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* of James Hastings, theology is explained as that in particular connected with Christianity. Interestingly the editors of the encyclopaedia, who have not given the meaning to the word 'philosophy', connected it with other religions and sects, etc. Thus, it is evident that the Europeans, especially the religious minded have respect for the word 'theology' and disregard for the word 'philosophy', therefore they considered other religions of the world under 'philosophy'. Thus the result of which neither Indian religions were considered perfectly as religions nor Indian *darsanas* theologies. The actual meaning of the word 'theology' is something wider, universal and does not limited to any particular religion. Therefore, it can be applied to the study of any religion in the world; hence any treatises on religion shall be called theological.

Conclusion

To sum up, the following is the thesis on the so-called Indian philosophy.

1) Indian philosophy in the correct sense of the term 'philosophy' is not philosophy at all, when its content, spirit and subject matter are examined with reference to the definition.
2) The so-called Indian philosophy is based upon or evolved from religious literature and experience.
3) The contents and schools of the so-called Indian philosophy are '*darsanas*' according to ancient Indian writers; and the themes and doctrines do appropriately suits to the definition of '*darsana*'.
4) The appropriate translation to the word 'philosophy' is '*Anviksiki*' of Sanskrit language; definitions of both the words are similar.
5) Therefore, *darsanas* should not be called or translated as 'philosophy', because both the meanings are different.
6) The methodology of '*darsana*', its scope, subject matter and spirit can be named or called as 'theology' in English language, as both the words indicate the same subject matter in their respective languages.
7) Therefore, the point is that the histories of Indian philosophy are to be called as the histories of Indian theology.
8) Now the task of the Indian intellectuals is to find out, trace out, and record their histories of *anviksiki* or histories of Indian philosophy (*anviksiki*).

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Can the Externalist Metaepistemology Answer Skepticism?

> You may feel sure that you are sitting reading these words now. But couldn't even this basic belief be mistaken? Perhaps an evil demon is deliberately and cunningly manipulating your sensory input; perhaps you are really just wired up to a sophisticated virtual reality machine and what looks like a book in front of you is really nothing more than a series of electrical impulses sent directly into your brain. How do you even know that you have a body at all?
>
> —Descartes, *Meditations*

The Challenge of the Skeptics

There are many philosophers who held the view that skepticism is irrefutable and for them, we cannot vindicate our claims to know anything. No doubt, a skeptic challenge is something which must be taken seriously. But how to face his challenge?

Usually, three kinds of skepticism are identified: moderate, weak and radical. A moderate skepticism is the view that we cannot completely be justified regarding the belief. A weak skepticism is that we can know some obvious truths, such as mathematical and logical, but not metaphysical truths. Radical skepticism claims that we cannot be completely certain that any of our beliefs are true. We cannot even know that we cannot have knowledge. Philosophers have taken the radical skepticism seriously. According to it, we have no (epistemic) reason to believe anything. Not only that, we cannot even judge propositions as more or less probable. Radical skepticism thus expects that we suspend judgement. But is it possible to suspend our judgement?

There is also another classification made with regard to skepticism, namely, the global and local skepticism. Global skepticism makes a claim about our epistemic access to *all* truths. Descartes and Keith Lehrer represent global skepticism. Local skepticism is (strong or weak) concerned about a given class of propositions. A local skeptic accepts mathematical as well as empirical knowledge, while denying metaphysical knowledge, God's existence etc. Hume represents both global as well as local skepticism. A weak global skepticism is the theory, which says that one can have no knowledge of anything whereas a strong global skepticism accepts that one has no epistemically rational beliefs about anything.

Skepticism is radical in three ways:

1. It is comprehensive and directed at all our beliefs.
2. It denies justification and not knowledge.
3. To deny that a belief is justified is not necessarily skeptical.

We cannot say that a skeptic contention namely that any knowledge with regard to the world is untenable and unacceptable. But this does not mean that one can reject the skeptic so easily. He has something to offer. The rejection of his views is possible after giving him a chance to speak and then see what is correct and incorrect in his argument. In other words, there must be some justification in our rejection of a skeptic claim. We are concerned with cognitive skepticism in this paper; though there are other forms like religious skepticism, ethical skepticism etc. A cognitive skeptic denies man's ability to gain knowledge.

The basic question, which a skeptic raises, is this: "How can one gain knowledge using a source of belief unless one knows that this is trustworthy?" From the time of Descartes at least, the question is about our knowledge of the external world. The skeptic asks the question, namely, how we can have any knowledge of the external world at all. Peter Unger makes some attempt to give an argument in support of skepticism. He says that if one knows that *p*, then one has the right to be absolutely certain that it is *p* and to disregard evidence pointing against *p*. In a statement, "He knows it is raining, but he was not absolutely certain that it was" is not only infelicitous but also inconsistent. I will come back to this point later.

Ancient and Modern Skepticism

In the ancient period, skepticism emerged as a reaction to the Stoics who supported the dogmatic metaphysics. Skepticism prior to Pyrrho, (like Arcesilaus 315–240 BC) known by the name, "Academic skepticism" argued that "there is only one thing I know and that is that I know nothing and even I don't know that." When the Oracle at Delphi said that Socrates is the wisest man alive, Socrates said that the difference between him and others is that both he and others were essentially ignorant; others knew nothing and were ignorant of that they knew nothing, whereas he knew nothing and also knew that he knew nothing. A wise man knows that he knows nothing whereas the ignorant does not know that he knows nothing.

Pyrrho, (360–270 BC) who accompanied Alexander to India, and Sextus Empiricus (3 AD) are the important skeptics of the Greek period. According to Pyrrho we can know nothing as to the nature of things and hence the right attitude towards them is to withhold judgement. The necessary result of suspending judgement is imperturbability. Pyrronian skepticism differs from academic skepticism in the sense that academic skeptics claimed to know one thing, i.e., that they did not have any other knowledge, whereas the Pyrronians denied even that. Pyrrho was followed by his students, Timon and later by Aenesidemus and finally by Sextus. Sextus Empiricus defines skepticism as follows: "Skepticism is an ability to place in antithesis, in any manner whatever, appearances and judgements, and thus—because of the equality of force in the objects and arguments opposed—to come first of all to a suspension of judgement and then to mental tranquility."[1] Sextus believed that things are relative and we are left with the conclusion that we shall not be able to state what is the nature of each of the objects in its own real purity, but only what nature it appears to possess in its relative character. Hence it follows that we must suspend judgement concerning the real nature of the objects.

The ancient skepticism ended with the death of Sextus. In modern period, we have two important skeptic thinkers, Descartes and Hume. Descartes as a methodological skeptic uses skepticism to avoid error to arrive at an indubitable knowledge of mathematical truth. Descartes in his first *Meditations* raised some skeptical questions, which he himself answered in his second *Meditations.* His demon argument exhibits this. Hume's epistemological skepticism has two parts: (1) recognition of human fallibility, and (2) our proneness to error. G.E. Moore's two important articles, "A Defense of Common Sense" and "Proof of the External World" make an attempt to answer skepticism by refuting it with common sense. According to him, if skepticism is true then, we cannot have knowledge of the external world; since we have knowledge of the external world, skepticism must be false. We have two modern skeptics in the contemporary period, Keith Lehrer and Peter Unger. Lehrer's skeptical thesis is as follows: In his "Why Not Skepticism", he says:

> "The form of skepticism I wish to avow is more radical than traditional skepticism. Some philosophers have maintained that we do not know about anything beyond some necessary truths and some truths about our own subjective states. But they have not denied that we do know about those matters. I wish to seriously consider a stronger form of skepticism, to wit, that we do not know anything."[2]

Lehrer argues that the above contention of Moore is not acceptable for the reason that Moore failed to answer the question relating to knowledge claims. Justification requirement is absent in knowledge claims. This means that in order to know *p*, one must be justified in believing that *p*. Since it is not possible for us to have complete justification in our beliefs, it is not possible to have knowledge. Lehrer argues that for a person to know something, it must be logically impossible that he be in error about it. His view is that a skeptic may contend that we do not know that anything is logically impossible however strongly convinced we may be. Further a skeptic may conclude that we do not know that those beliefs are true even where the logical possibility of error is excluded, because we do not know that the logical possibility of error is excluded.[3] But later in his *Knowledge,* Lehrer did not hold the position of a skeptic. He formulated a positive theory of knowledge, which led him to conclude that we can legitimately claim to know things. Here he deals with the relationship between his current epistemological views and his earlier skepticism.[4]

Peter Unger in his *Ignorance: A Case for Skepticism*[5] defends skepticism in a radical way. He defends two forms of skepticism, namely, the *skepticism about knowledge* and the *skepticism about rationality.* He uses the term, "ignorance" to express his skepticism about knowledge. He observes: "I will say that a being is *ignorant* as to whether something is so if and only if the being does *not know* that it is not so; that is, just in the case the being does not know whether or not the things is so. And I will say that the skeptical conclusion we now seek to yield may be put like this: Everybody is always *ignorant of everything.*" And, intending to establish our conclusion as a necessary truth, I will say, finally, that this argument means to show that ignorance is necessary, or inevitable, as well as universal, or complete, or total."[6] Similarly about rationality he says, "... all people are irrational *simpliciter.*"[7] He explains this further by saying: " no one can ever by reasonable in anything, not even in the least degree, and ... no one can ever be justified either."[8] It must be clear from his two forms of skepticism that Unger claims that first we are ignorant, in that we can know nothing, and secondly we are irrational because we cannot even reasonably believe anything.

The basic position of the skeptics is that we do not know any proposition about the external world. Anthony Brueckner examines this in the following way. Take a representative proposition about the external world, which I claim to know, like, "I am sitting". A counterpossibility to that proposition is a proposition, which is logically possible but logically incompatible with it. The counterpossibility principle says that if I know that *p* and I know that *q* is a counterpossibility to *p*, then I can rule out *q*. i.e., I know that *q*. This is equivalent to the principle that knowledge is closed under known logical implication. This closure principle says that if I know that *p* and I know that *p* logically implies *q*, then I know that *q*.[9] The skeptic argues as follows:

1. The proposition that I am a brain in a vat with sense experience is qualitatively indistinguishable from my actual sense experience is a counterpossibility to the proposition that I am sitting.
2. If I know that I am sitting, then I know that I am not such a brain in a vat.
3. I do not know that I am not such a brain in a vat.
4. I do not know that I am sitting. (derived from 2 and 3).[10]

It must be kept in mind that the failure of the traditional analysis of knowledge (JTB) made the epistemologists to impose conditions in addition to truth, replacing or supplanting the requirement for justification. This is visible in Causation (Goldman), Reliable method (Goldman, Armstrong), and Truth-tracking (Nozick). For BonJour, justification is a means to truth. Justification depends on logical relations between beliefs. Unger argues that justification requires a logical guarantee of truth. Hence there is the epistemological importance of justification. Austin very correctly said that when I say, "I know", I give others my word: I give others my authority for saying, "*S* is *p*". Putnam questions the intelligibility of the skeptical conclusion given by its premises. In his "Brains in a vat"[11] he argues that if we were brains in a vat, we cannot answer that we are brains in a vat.

Externalist Metaepistemology and its Claims

Richard Fumerton,[12] makes a distinction between metaepistemology and normative epistemology. He considers metaepistemological questions as those primarily concerned with the analysis of epistemic concepts. Metaepistemology is a study into the analysis of concepts fundamental to epistemological understanding. For, Fumerton, it deals with issues like: (1) What is the meaning of "rational belief" in its epistemic sense? (2) What is the meaning of "*S* rationally believes *p*" when this is an epistemic evaluation? (3) What is the concept of epistemic rationality?

The traditional debate over skepticism has largely presupposed the framework of foundationalism. But there are two different ways to understand foundational justification. i.e., either by internalism or by externalism. The internalist is one who is committed to the theory that epistemic properties are internal characteristics of a subject. They maintain that *S*'s knowing that *p*, or having a justified belief that *p*, consists in *S*'s being in some internal state. "... a theory of justification is *internalist* if and only if it requires that all of the factors needed for a belief to be epistemically justified for a given person be *cognitively accessible* to that person, internal to his cognitive perspective," says BonJour.[13] The externalist on the other hand is committed to the view that knowledge and justified belief at least involve external states. The skeptic depends on the principle of inferential justification. A belief that *p* is inferentially justified if its justification is constituted by having of at least one belief other than *p*. The foundationalist agrees that every justified belief owes its justification ultimately to some belief that is non-inferentially justified. A belief is non-inferentially justified if its justification does not consist in having of any other beliefs.

Foundationalism deals with the issue of skepticism in the background of internalism and externalism. The internalist tries to understand the problem by saying that the epistemic properties are internal. As Kent Bach says that internalism treats justifiedness as a purely internal matter. If P is justified for S, then S must be aware of what makes it justified and why.[14] The internalist further claims that two people cannot be in identical internal states while one justifies in believing *p* and the other is not justified in believing *p*. Thus they are concerned about the epistemic justification. This is not acceptable to the externalists. They are of the view that two people can be in the same present internal senses while one has a justified belief and the other does not have a justified belief. Descartes, Hume, Chisholm, Price and Russell are the internalists whereas Goldman, Nozick, Dretske and Armstrong are the externalists.

There is no common agreement among the internalists and the externalists with regard to the issue namely how to understand the epistemic concepts such as justification or warrant or knowledge. For example, two important principles of the internalists have been attacked by the externalists. The first is the idea that justification should be understood deontologically and second is the principle that justification consists in having a reason in the form of another belief. "To understand justification deontologically is to think of it as a matter of duty fulfillment, as something involving obligation, responsibility and the like."[15] Alston in his paper, "The Deontological Conception of Epistemic Justification"[16] and Plantinga,[17] offer a critique for the first principle. The second principle was supported by BonJour in *The Structure of Empirical Knowledge*.[18] Thinkers like Fumerton and Moser are those internalists who reject the first principle. In addition to the above two principles, there is also one more principle, which claims that the externalists have not correctly analyzed the philosophically interesting epistemic properties. It is argued further that they either have changed the subject of focus on properties that have not traditionally been the focus of epistemological inquiry or they have failed to fully appreciate and understand the philosophical depth and implications of the properties that have been the focus of traditional epistemology.[19] Let us go further to see the internalists' objection and the answer given by the externalists.

The externalists believe that a belief that *p* is warranted if and only if it is caused by the fact that *p*. Here comes the internalist to make an objection by saying that this proposal has not really answered the skeptics. The skeptic challenges the view that all our beliefs are warranted. But the externalist agues that if one's belief that is caused by the fact that *p*, then the skeptical problem is solved because of the reason that belief in question is in fact warranted.

Moreover, the externalists argue that this view of theirs would allow that a belief that *p* can be warranted even if the person holding it has no idea how to go about determining whether that belief was caused by the fact that *p*.[20] The internalists do not accept this solution. According to them, a belief is not warranted unless the person holding it is somehow aware that the conditions necessary for warrant are satisfied. The internalists try to solve this problem in their own way by saying that it is necessary to add the internalist condition to the analysis of warrant. Two major criticisms can be pointed out against the externalist in this connection. The first is by BonJour who says as follows: "Externalists would have been taken by Descartes and generations of philosophers who followed either to be hopelessly confused or to be simply changing the subject ... My own conviction is that this reaction is in fact correct. Externalism reflects an inadequate appreciation of the problem at which it is aimed."[21] Similarly, Fumerton argues as follows: "The externalist has failed to analyze a philosophically interesting concept of justification or knowledge".[22] Further he says: "It seems to many of us that the externalist is simply missing the point of the philosophical inquiry ... The externalist analysis of epistemic concepts never was adequate to a philosophical understanding of epistemic concepts."[23]

Both the criticisms of BonJour and Fumerton point to one thing. The externalist analyses of epistemic concepts or properties are philosophically unsatisfactory, because "they are not accurate analyses of philosophically interesting epistemic concepts or properties."[24] The criticism is that the externalists have given an inaccurate, inadequate and philosophically unsatisfying analysis of the very epistemic properties that the internalist seeks to analyse. This in other words means that the externalists have focused on the right property but have failed to understand it correctly.[25]

The Rejection of the Principle of Inferential Justification by the Externalists

Almost all the externalists will reject the skeptic claims about the non-inferential justification. The skeptic depends on the principle of inferential justification. It goes as follows: "To be justified in believing one proposition *p* on the basis of another proposition E, one must be (i) justified in believing E and (2) justified in believing that E makes probable *p*".[26] The skeptic depends on the above inferential justification and would make arguments about the physical world, the past, future, other mind etc., He comes to a conclusion that only justification available in all the above cases is simply based on the inferential justification. But here, the question is this: "How do I infer?" The internalist like BonJour, by using the principle of "Doxastic Presumption" (DP) argues that epistemological inquiry cannot start without the DP. The DP claims that most of agent's belief about the beliefs he or she has (otherwise known as agent's metabeliefs) must be true. Hilary Kornblith argues that this is similar to the arguments made by Shoemaker and Malcolm which were criticized by others as supporters of verificationalism. It is valid in the case of DP also.

The externalist tries to answer the skeptics. One of the influential and sophisticated versions of externalism is reliabilism. In Goldman's metaepistemology, we find an answer to the problem of skepticism. Goldman's paper, "What is Justified Belief?" is an attempt in this direction. According to him, when a belief is justified, it has a virtue. From the epistemic perspective, virtue has something to do with truth. The beliefs that are good from the epistemic perspective are those that are produced by reliable belief-forming mechanisms. Commenting on Goldman's reliabilism, Fumerton says: "Reliable belief-forming mechanisms are those beliefs that usually get you true beliefs, and since reliability is not an all-or-nothing matter, a false belief can be produced by a reliable belief-forming mechanism."[27]

For the reliabilist, the main requirement for epistemic justification is that a belief be produced or caused in a way or through a process that makes it objectively the belief is true. Such a mode of belief-production is a reliable source of true belief. Reliabilism is interested in knowing whether the belief was produced by a reliable process. What is important in reliabilism is not whether one can give the correct account of his or her reasons for beliefs, but whether one's belief-forming mechanisms are functioning properly in the suitable context. Goldman says that there are some faulty process of belief-formation which are unjustified, like, confused reasoning, wishful thinking, reliable on emotional attachment, hasty generalization etc. Goldman shows that they share the feature of unreliability. Goldman argument goes as follows: "... they tend to produce error a large proportion of the time. By contrast, which species of belief-forming processes is intuitively justification conferring? They include standard perceptual processes, remembering, good reasoning, and introspection. What these processes seem to have in common is reliability: the belief they produce are generally reliable."[28]

Goldman develops his argument on the three conditions as follows:

Agent *A*'s belief that *p* (*ABp*) is justified, if,

1. The belief that *p* is the result of a reliable process.
2. Given *A*'s relevant alternatives, there was no perceptual equivalents that could lead *A* to have a false belief.
3. The Belief that *p* is true.

What do the reliabilists convey by this? They try to dismiss the Gettier counterexamples by dismissing or altering the third condition by saying that "Agent A is justified in believing that *p*" should be construed in terms of being able to give reasons for that belief that the *p*. For the reliablists, we do not have to know or have access to the grounds for our beliefs in order to have knowledge. For the reliability there is no need for cognitive access to the grounds of one's beliefs. On the other hand they say that the causal relationships, or law like connections between belief states (S believes that *p*) and the state of affairs that makes *p* true, such that given that S believes that *p*, it must be the case that *p*. Thus Goldman concludes that we are justified in our belief by a reliable process and knowledge is simply true belief that is justified by being caused by a reliable process.

Another contemporary epistemologist who responded to the traditional skepticism is Nozick. In his metaepistemology, he accepts a version of reliabilism as adequate for understanding the concept of epistemically justified belief. For him, "*S* knows that *p* when *S*'s belief that *p* tracks the fact *p*". Let us see the challenge of the skeptics and the counter to it by Nozick. The skeptics ask the following questions: Do we have knowledge of the external world? Are the particular things we seem to perceive really what they seem to be? Assume that we are looking at a lush McIntosh apple. It is red, firm and tasty. We see it, touch it, and taste it etc. This means that due to our senses we know all this. But could we not be deceived? But if somebody says that redness is not a property in the world but an effect manufactured in our minds, firmness a property in us not in the apple and also the taste is in us and not in the apple. We could be hallucinating. Now a skeptic can make the following argument to support his conclusion:

(1) If I know that I have a McIntosh apple in my hand, then I know that I am not hallucinating or dreaming this.
(2) But I do not know that I am not hallucinating that I am hallucinating or dreaming this, because knowledge entails having a complete justification for what is known and I have no complete justification that I am not hallucinating.
(3) Therefore, I do not know that I have a McIntosh apple in my hand.

The above argument seems to be valid. The first premise seems to be valid and also the second. The force of the argument is not that we do not have justified beliefs or even true justified beliefs. The skeptic claims that we could be wrong about any of our statements. This means that we do not have knowledge.

Now Nozick explains how the skeptics are wrong. He says that I can know that a McIintosh apple is in front of me and I can know that if such an apple is in front of me then I am not hallucinating. But knowing all this does not entail that I know that I am not hallucinating. This means that knowledge is not closed under known entailment. I do not have to refute the skeptic in order to know that I am truly perceiving. Here Nozick says that knowledge tracks the truth.

Nozick says that a person *S* knows the *p* iff

(1) *p* is true.
(2) *S* believes that *p*.
(3) If *p* were not true, *S* would not believe that *p*.
(4) If *p* were true, S would still believe that *p*

Can there be a reconciliation of Internalism and Externalism?

The debate between internalism and externalism made some epistemologists to go for a reconciliation. Commenting on the nature of externalism, David Armstrong says: "According to Externalist account of non-inferential knowledge, what makes a true non-inferential belief a case of *knowledge* is some natural relation, which holds between the belief-state, *Bap*, and the situation which makes the belief true."[29] Armstrong maintains the view that externalism is a view about knowledge, and it is the view that when a person knows that a particular claim *p* is true, there is some sort of "natural relation" which holds between that person's belief that *p* and the world. Goldman's causal theory of knowledge maintains that a person knows that *p* was caused by the fact that *p*. Goldman's reliability theory of knowledge says that a person knows that *p* when that person's belief is both true and, in some sense, reliable: the belief must be a reliable indicator that *p*; for others, the belief must be produced by a reliable process, that is, one that tends to produce true beliefs. Brian Skyrms, Peter Unger and Fred Dretske are some important thinkers belonging to this group. There is a difference between Armstrong and Goldman with regard to the reliability theory. Armstrong rejects the view that knowledge requires justified true belief. On the other hand, Goldman says that instead of seeing reliability account as rejecting the claim that knowledge requires justified true belief, we should accept an account, which identifies justified belief with reliability produced belief.

Goldman argues that internalistic conception of justification is untenable. He shows how traditional epistemology has been dominated by the internalists. He further says that according to the internalist perspective the purpose of epistemology is to construct a doxastic principle or procedure from the inside. Thus Goldman concludes that only externalism is a tenable theory of justification. On the other hand, BonJour considers that any tenable theory of justification must reject externalism and accept internalism.

The externalist theory tries to solve the epistemic regress problem, otherwise known as "structural problem". It is the problem of how to avoid an infinite and presumably vicious regress of justification in one's account of the justification of empirical beliefs. BonJour supports a traditional, internalist epistemology which says that epistemic justification derives from the subject taking what is given to his conscious awareness and also accepting claims or sets of reasoning on an apriori basis. Of course, Sosa rejects the internalist foundationalism of BonJour. The questions, which arise here, are as follows: What reasons, if any are there, for thinking that our various empirical beliefs are true? How our beliefs are empirically justified? The answer given by skeptics is that there are no such reasons, no epistemic justification, for any empirical belief. This no doubt, is an extreme form of skepticism.

Reliabilism has its own advantages. It offers a solution to the problem of skepticism. How does it solve the problem of skepticism? One cannot know whether one's brain is in a vat or is deceived by a demon, but certainly one cannot deny the fact that he is having a head. It is not necessary for a person to know that the skeptical hypothesis is false in order to know the things that he knows. All that is necessary is that our beliefs are true and they have arisen or are sustained in a correct manner. For example, if I see a dog before me, I know that there is a dog before me even if I cannot refute the skeptic. This means even though reliabilism cannot disprove the skeptical hypothesis, it claims that the possibility of a deceiving demon does not show that I do not have knowledge of the external world.

Is reliablism free from objection? The answer is "no". It has been shown by many thinkers that external reliability is not necessary for epistemic justification. Stewart Cohen says justification seems intuitively to exist even in the face of models of beliefs production that are not in fact reliable. Another criticism is that what counts, as a reliable belief-forming mechanism is vague. What is the percentage of true beliefs that the process be able to produce it is to be admitted as reliable? Also it is difficult to state the standard conditions that must be obtained for a process to function reliably. Putnam gives a counterexample to reliabilism. Assume that the Dalai Lama is infallible on matters of faith and morality. According to Putnam, on reliable logic any one who believes in the Dalai Lama and who believes any of his statements on faith and morals uses a method that is absolutely reliable. Suppose a true believer, Trudy believes what the Dalai Lama says about euthanasia, abortion and the existence of God, but her only reason for believing these things is "the Dalai Lama says so." Now Putnam says that it is obvious that Trudy's beliefs are not justified and so reliabilism is falsified.[30]

All these criticisms do not mean that there is no truth in reliabilism. Perceptual beliefs seem to occur in non-cognitive ways suitable to a reliabilist analysis. Not only that, the memory beliefs are better analyzed by a reliabilist theory. It gives a better account of what it is to know a proposition, but it does not explain what it is to be justified in believing a proposition. Only internalism can answer this. For this reason, it is argued that reconciliation between externalism and internalism is necessary. BonJour's following remarks on this should be taken seriously. "... there are in fact important and clearly epistemological questions for which a predominantly externalist approach seems preferable, and others for which only an internalist approach will do. If this is so, then perhaps externalism and internalism are best regarded as complementary approaches to largely different issues, rather than as competitors."[31]

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Ethics, Applied Ethics and Indian Theories of Morals

Ethical theories have often been hailed as exalted principles of morals meant for guiding human life towards an ideal, desirable world; but more often than not many such theories are found to be inapplicable or difficult to apply to actual life situations. Let us make an attempt to explore the genesis of this apparent contradiction and offer some methodological hints for effective application of ethics to practical life. In this endeavour, I shall analyze some Indian ethical theories, especially the theory of *dharma* which is a perfect example of moral theories meant for guiding human conduct. Indian theories I consider to be of special significance since they have in them pregnant hints for applicability as much as they (many of them) typify inapplicable abstract principles of morals. To this purpose let me dwell at some length upon the nature of ethical theories in general, and as we go on we will see that most of them are vulnerable because of our proneness for abstraction and absolutism as well as for what may be called generalism. This will also be seen to be the result of what I call 'literalism', i.e. of our tendency to take these theories in their *literal* sense at the expense of their proper spirit. The proneness and the tendency, jointly and severally, lead to the theories' not only being misunderstood and vulnerable but also to their applicability to practical life being seriously questioned.

Indian philosophers have always believed that our ethical theories are realizable[1]—that 'ought' means 'can'. This, incidentally, points to the fact that contrary to the opinion of some modern writers,[2] ethics works within the bounds of logic. For if 'ought' means 'can', then conversely 'cannot' means 'ought not'. That is, if something is impossible (cannot be possibly achieved) then one ought not to try to achieve it. Ethics does not ask for the impossible. It thus means that ethical theories can be applied in practice, because they are principles we ought to follow. Indian thinkers therefore insist that the ethical ideals are realizable. The matter can be further explained by the fact that the purpose of ethics is to provide guidance for practical life and, if this is so, it should be possible to live and act in accordance with the principles of ethics. It must be possible to apply ethical theories in the world we live in. As Rajendra Prasad put it most appropriately in his *Varnadharma, Niskama Karma and Practical Morality,*[3] ethical theories have a sort of built-in applicability and moral principles are such that it must not only be logically possible but also empirically possible to live and act in accordance with them. For any such theory to be applicable, Prasad points out, the world must be such that (a) it must not make its application impossible and (b) the people in it, by their very nature, consider it as a valid moral principle and are inclined to act in accordance with it. With these conditions satisfied, any theory that is still not applicable to the world is what I propose to call a bad ethical theory which will have nothing to contribute to the making of a morally desirable world. I shall argue that such theories will have to be toned down, even violated, in view of the world being as it is and human nature being as it is. This we have to do for a morally good reason; and this will be *a justified violation.*

We must now proceed to illustrate and examine some cases of ethical theories that are not applicable or difficult to apply and how our foregoing analysis and argument can help. Let us take the moral principle of truth telling for an example. In ancient Indian tradition (perhaps this is true also of ancient traditions every where), truth-telling, and conversely not telling lies, was considered the highest kind of virtue—a *sadharana dharma*—which no other *dharma* can override. This is what Lord Krishna says in the *Mahabharat* and so says Bhisma several times in the *Shanti Prarva* thereof. To be sure, truth-telling is a great virtue; but taken in the absolute, literal sense, the theory becomes inapplicable or lead to undesirable and even morally disastrous consequences, if applied. It is said of an ancient scholar that he had decided not to open his lips in discussions of contentious issues, and when asked about the reason of his cryptic silence he would reply, "*anrtat bhayam*", he was afraid that he might say something that might turn out to be false! At the other extreme (Prasad's example) there is the case of the ancient *ṛṣi* Kaushika, who had vowed to speak only the truth. It so happened that one day a group of passers-by went hiding under a thicket near where the *ṛṣi* lived, since they were being chased by some bandits. When the bandits came and asked about them, the *ṛṣi* told them the truth, and the bandits looted and killed those innocent men. What is noteworthy is that, according to the epic, the truthful Kaushika had to taste the horror of hell for having spoken that particular piece of truth. It is clear to our minimum moral sense that the theory of truth-telling, taken literally, is a bad ethical theory and needs to be toned down, or even violated, in a demanding situation like the one described. That is the reason why Krishna himself had persuaded *Dharmaraja* Yuddhistira to tell the lie about the death of Aswathama in order that Drona, the invincible, may lay down his arms and the battle of *Mahabharat* could be own by the deserving Pandavas. In fact, as Prasad pointed out, the *Mahabharat* prescribes such justified violations of the principles of truth-telling in five specific demanding situations (*Karna Parva,* p. 398, 31–3). Now what is the ethical theory which, being applied here, makes the violation of this great moral principle morally justified? Surely, it is consequentialism, judging the morality of actions on the basis of prizable consequences. The same goes for the other celebrated *sadharana dharmas* of non-stealing (*asteya*) and non-killing *(ahimsa)*. Ṛṣi Viswamitra made a justified violation of the former when he stole some meat to save the lives of his starving family, while Bhisma gave a similar treatment to the latter when he commended that scriptural owl for breaking hundreds of eggs of a poisonous snake, thereby preventing calamitous loss of human lives from the numerous venomous snakes that would have hatched out of those eggs (this has been cited by

Prasad, *ibid.*, p. 24). Since a great good resulted from this, the so-called *adharma* committed by the owl was as good as, or perhaps better than, the normally considered *dharma* of non-killing. Classical Indian theories of *dharma* consider such violation of celebrated moral principles not only permissible but also commendable. Violations in the Viswamitra-like situations are justified as *apad dharma* or duty in emergent, calamitus situations. It is a matter of important moral significance that it is not always irrational not to do what conventional morality requires us to do, nor is it always rational (approved by moral rationality) to act as per the moral commandments in the received sense. Take, for example the maxim that to forgive is divine. The *Mahabharat,* which is naturally expected to assent to this*, has implicit instructions to the contrary. Prahlada says this to his grand son, Bali, regarding the moral virtue of forgiving: 'forgiving in all conditions is not allowed, even for the wise people'.

> "... *tasmāt nityam kshyamā tāta panditeirapi varjitā*"[4]

A blanket commandment to forgive, a literal adherence to this commandment, cannot be morally justified. For forgiveness granted indiscriminately to every offender, irrespective of whether or not he sincerely realizes his guilt and repents and hence deserves forgiveness, may be morally counterproductive on occasions and even undesirable; for:

> He who always forgives all offenders indiscriminately acquires many defects; his servants, enemies as well as people unrelated to him do not take him seriously and rather disrespect him, and no one behaves with him in a humble manner.

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*For it holds *ksama* to be of the highest authority: *ksama dharma, ksamayajna, ksama veda, ksama srtam;* forgiveness is morality, forgiveness is sacrifice, forgiveness is the Veda and forgiveness is revealed truth. (*Mahabharat,* volume II. p. 1026: 32).

Yo nityam ksamate tāta bahun dosān sah bindati//
Bhrtyāh paribhavantyena-mudāsnastathārayah.
(See ibid, p.1022:7)

Forgiveness is morally justified only if it is extended on morally justified grounds, i.e. when extended to the offender who really deserves it. Forgiveness, like most moral values, is a conditional virtue, which admits of justified violations in demanding situations. Classical Indian ethics, some modern writings on it included, often miss the point because of proneness to absolutism and generality.

Moral values instantiate those important kinds of things, i.e. principles and relations, which holds necessarily, though, on occasions, they may be defeasible in overriding circumstances, where another competing value demands precedence. The necessity of moral values is a weaker sort of necessity[5] that is different from the strictly logical form of absolute necessity, which is unexceptionable and hence inapplicable to practical life. For ethics, unlike logic, is a product of the society and social living that aims at promoting values common and conducive to effective and desirable social living. In this sense it operates at the empirical level of social process and so moral principles grow out of taking due note of the peculiarities and relevance of particular cases of moralizing. The appropriateness of a value to be pursued, therefore, cannot be thought apart from social realities. The normal situational fact is that people live in the society, which runs through various circles of interactions, which, in turn, demand "various kinds and degrees of cooperation, competition and conflicts."[6] Moral values like truth telling, therefore, need to be pursued accordingly. It would neither be reasonable nor prudent to tell the truth to an enemy or a business competitor. A business boss is not being dishonest if he does not speak the 'whole truth' in a press conference; nor is an ailing patient being untruthful when she responds with "Fine! thank you" to a visitor's courtesy "How are you ?", which she would *be* in responding in a similar manner to her attending physician's query. Withholding truth in such situations would not be a blanket violation of the virtue of truth-telling; and defeasibility of a virtue under demanding situations does not and cannot turn this virtue to a vice at all. In sufficiently demanding situations, like the one in which Kaushika spoke the truth, a considerate and useful lie would have been a better alternative—a morally better alternative—to an undesirable revelation of truth. And this would have been a proper example of a justified violation of a (conventional) moral principle—sanctioned, as we have noted, by our scriptures and the masters of reputed traditions. This is not, however, to lapse into unfettered relativism, for the violations are *justified* by a reasoned balance between the spirit of the principle and the demands of the situation, without which ethics cannot be the social affair it is primarily meant to be. Perhaps because of considerations like this, Mackie has warned by pleading: "A prudent man will not squander his limited stock of convincing lies, but use it sparingly to the best effect."[7]

A moral theory, like any genuine philosophical theory, must be logically consistent. Just as it is impossible to think illogically, so also a logically indefensible normative theory cannot provide effective guidance for moral living and practical life. Only by making our moral theories logically consistent can we apply them to human situations for the promotion of the good life *(nihsreyasa)*. The function of moral philosophy, as that of philosophy, must not be merely reportive but analytic and reconstructive, by which our ethical theories can be made logically consistent, wherever necessary and applied effectively to the world. Hence the justification of "justified violations" of exalted theory of morals. As I have brought out above, the classical Indian ethics abounds with examples of this sort of exercise, despite appearances to the contrary. Yet this has not been the case with some of our celebrated theories of morals as envisaged in our scriptures. By way of illustration and with a view to improving upon them, I pick out two cases of what I have called bad ethical theories, one of which, because of flawed logic, could not be effectively applicable and inevitably led to several moral crises, and the other, because of its exalted absolute standard, led to morally disastrous consequences when applied. The former is the theory *of dharma* (duties) in the *Bhagavad Gita* and the latter is the principle of promise keeping of Bhisma in the *Mahabharat*.

Let me briefly deal with the latter first. Bhisma *pratijna,* the promise keeping of Bhisma, is a proverbial moral ideal in Indian value tradition. Bhisma was promise bound to protect the throne of Hastinapura and be loyal to the king, and he kept his promise till his last breath. But in the process of his promise keeping he was forced to do what Dhritarastra desired him to do and even had to fight against the virtuous Pandavas, knowing fully well that the Kauravas were on serious immoral path. What is worse, when after the deceitful game of dice, the virtuous Draupadi was being shabbily treated and was going to be disrobed in public by the wicked brother of Duryodhana—both the actions progressively immoral in that order by any standard of common morality—Bhisma, the paragon of virtue and repository of *dharma,* had to remain a helpless spectator. Even when asked by the wailing Draupadi whether it was right and in accordance with *dharma* on the part of Yudhistira to put her in stake, after having lost his freedom and hence his agency, in the game of dice, Bhisma pleaded inability to answer her question on the plea that the meaning of *dharma* was too deep and too subtle[8] to admit of an answer. This may be so with the meaning of *dharma,* but our moral common sense cannot accept disrobing of a virtuous lady of great dynasty—for that matter, of any woman—in public as a *dharmic* action in any sense of the term, much less can it accept the fact that Bhisma, whom Lord Krishna used to describe as the repository of dharma[9] (*dharmamayonidhih*), did not have enough knowledge to answer Draupadi's question and prevent the ghastly immoral attempt to disrobe her. It was a different matter that Krishna mysteriously (!) prevented the attempted disrobing of Draupadi, but morality was disrobed that day and nobody tried to prevent that. I am slightly intrigued by Prasad's implicit assent to Bhisma's plea as the "truth" (!) that the meaning of *dharma* is too deep and too subtle for him not to be able to answer Draupadi's question. Prasad inadvertently runs into a position of avoidable ambivalence and mysticism by saying:

> ... the problem is unusually complicated and human intelligence is finite on account of which the application of ethical knowledge has become so difficult.

and

> ... his [Bhisma's] saying that, because the meaning of *dharma* is extremely subtle and deep, he does not know how to answer her question, very well illustrates this *truth*.[10]

At any rate, it does not require an uncommon intelligence to answer the question and to know that it was Bhisma's literal adherence to the abstract theory of promise-keeping, which not only kept him from preventing this particular act of immorality, it also kept him from preventing a great moral disaster, the destruction of a whole royal dynasty and undesirable killings of many a virtuous personalities and innocent people. His violating this principle under these demanding circumstances would have told us a different story—of a morally desirable world.

Let us now turn to the *Gita* theory of *dharma* that recognized two types thereof—*svadharma* and *sadharana dharma*—both of which constitute very fundamental normative structure of our value system. The former are duties of every one because of his/her being a human being while the latter sets of duties are specific to persons belonging to a particular group or caste. Though the two types of dharmas are respectively guided by universal principles and sectarian principles, both are obligatory and normally inviolable Both are supposed to be categorical imperatives, for they ought to be performed and obeyed not because of any consequential considerations but because each is the right thing to do, each is a duty to be performed. It has been shown already that duties like truth-telling, non-stealing, non-killing and promise-keeping, which come under *sadharana dharma*, are not and cannot be, rather should not be taken as, absolute and unexceptionable, but are *defeasible* obligations that should be obeyed with suitable exceptions under demanding situations. We have now to assess the logicality of the *svadharmas* or *varnadharmas* being obligatory and categorical, as claimed by the authors of the theory and by most modern writers, including the present writer with reservations. The best way to begin such assessment is by considering the familiar moral crisis resulting from the inevitable conflict between these two moral principles, *svadharma* and *sadharana dharma,* both of which are claimed to be obligatory and imperative. This is very significant, for it is because Arjuna faced this very crisis and declined to fight in the battle of *Mahabharat* that Lord Krishna had to elaborate the *varnadharma* theory and tried to apply it persuasionally[11] to convince Arjuna that it was his *svadharma* as a *kshatriya* to fight to defend his country and people from the wicked influence of his *adharmic* adversaries. Yes, it was his *svadharma* to fight, argued Arjuna; but it was also his *sadharana dharma* (which has several scripture-backed preferences over *Svadharma*[12]) not to kill. How could he fight a war, which inevitably involves killing of people—that too of his venerable elders and own relations? What exactly was his duty here? *Svadharma* or *sadharana dharma*? This was a moral question to which the *Gita* seems to have no answer, no logical solution to offer. Instead of offering any logical counters to Arjuna's arguments and when his arguments failed to convince the latter, Krishna cast a sort of spell (!) on him and revealed to him his cosmic form *(Viswarupa),* and an overwhelmed Arjuna was made to fight. Instead of persuasionally applying an ethical principle to convince Arjuna to do what Krishna thought he (Arjuna) ought to do, he only used a non-moral method of emotional persuasion. *Varnadharma* was pleaded to be a greater duty than *sadharana dharma.* But how can a sectarian duty or caste-duty take precedence over a universal duty? As Prasad has argued elsewhere,[14] the *kshatriyadharma* of Arjuna had the level of (in fact *is*) a professional duty, which one has the option to change whereas his *sadharana dharma* of non-killing, as a universal moral duty, cannot be got rid of. As such his duty as a soldier cannot be equated with, much less treated as superior to, his duty as a man. Professional ethics cannot be equated with ethics as such, even if it were divinely installed,[15] as Krishna wanted to impress upon Arjuna *(guna karma vibhagasah chatrurvarnyam maya srustam**). For the last argument, if treated as overriding, would suffer from *aptadvahi tarkadosa.* Be that as it may, even treating the two *dharmas* as equally autonomous, our argument from defeasibility and the plea for justified violation put us in a logically better position to say that Krishna would have done better had he argued for the violation of the *sadharana dharma* of non-killing here in the interest of fighting a righteous war, which would have been a morally justified violation and Arjuna's *kshatradharma* would have had an arguable overriding capacity.

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* The first speculation of the four-fold division of the Hindu society is found in the Ṛgvedic *mantra* known as *Purusa-Sukta.* In its Vedic formulation, though, it was flexible and, except in a single verse (*Ṛgveda* II. XLIII. 2), was unconfined to heredity, but based on capacity and aptitudes.

Now let us move further in assessing the logicality of *Gita's* theory of *svadharma* or *varnadharma.* As is well known, *svadharmas* are supposed to be obligatory by natural necessitation, for the *Gita* defines a *svadharma* as born out of the nature of the members of the particular *varna.* This much at least is the implication of a *varnadharma* being defined as *svabhavaja* (*Bhagavad Gita*, XVIII, 42–44, and elsewhere). The assumption is that the four classes of people belong to four different "natural kinds", as it were, and the *gunas* (qualities) and *karmas* (actions), which are the basis of this division of each class are strictly limited to or typical of it and different from those of other *varnas.* It is advised that one ought to do what is required of him as per his own *svadharma* and not try to do what is the *svadharma* of some body else belonging to a different *varna,* which for him is *paradharma* (somebody else's duty). The *Gita* even has the injunction that it is better to die performing one's own duty *(svadharma)* than trying to do what is the duty of another person of a different *varna (paradharma)*; because the latter is fraught with fear.[16] And he who performs his *svadharma* incurs no sin,[17] even if the consequence of that action turns out to be harmful in any way, whereas he who takes resort to *paradharma* is considered to be doing something sinful; such a person should be dissuaded or disallowed from performing *paradharma* and even be punished if he does perform this. Ekalavya, the tribal youth, a *sudra,* was not permitted to learn the art of archery from Drona because that was not his *svadharma* and Sambuka, the tribal chief, was killed by Rama for performing *tapah* (meditation), which was not his *svadharma*!

Now let us see how this important ethical theory, being based on faulty logic, became inapplicable or, rather, could not be effectively applicable and led to undesirable consequences, when applied without qualification. The theory, as I see it, is based on two basic assumptions:* (1) The four *varnas* (classes or castes) are exclusive natural kinds and (2) one's *varnadharma* is determined by one's own nature or *swabhava.* From these premises it is supposed to follow that (3) what is natural to one is obligatory for him and *vice versa.* We can easily see that this theoretical framework leaves us with two options, each of which is unacceptable: Either (a) what one is naturally disposed to do is always morally right (so is one's bounden duty) or (b) it could be sometimes right and sometimes wrong, the theory has no criterion for the distinction between what is right and what is wrong (there is nothing to tell what one ought to do from what one ought not to do). While (a) is an obvious untruth, (b) is self-defeating for the theory. Thus, by *reductio ad absurdum,* we have good reason to conclude that (1) and (2) are weak assumptions of the theory. We have reasons to ask why the natural must be the determinant of what is one's duty or what is right for one to do? And the *varnadharma* tradition—*Gita, Mahabharat, and Manu Smriti*—has no answer to this, nor do we find any logical explanation offered.

Besides, it is a matter of common experience that despite our clear knowledge of right and wrong, *dharma* and *adharma,* quite often, by *natural* impulse, we refrain from doing the right thing and take resort to wrongdoing. Duryodhana's oft-quoted confession that, although he knows very well what is *dharma* and what is *adharma,* he has neither the inclination to stick to the former nor the disinclination from doing the latter,[18] is a clear indication of this fact of nature (human nature), which definitively falsifies the theory of natural necessitation (*svabhāvajatā*); one is not only not always necessitated but not even inclined to do what he knows he ought to do. It is odd and perhaps disappointing that the *Gita* did not have anything to explain, much less remove, this possibility of akratic abstention from one's duty and akratic indulgence in non-duties or wrongdoings. This, however, can be explained and applied to ethics, in its persuasional form, can try to remove or at least lessen, the occurrence of immoral actions under akratic conditions. Akratic abstention from duties and indulgence in non-duties is certainly an act of immorality; but this is no cause for despair. A moral philosopher, perhaps with a bit of psychological deconditioning, could use the agent's awareness, if not explicit guilt, that he has done something contrary to what he knows is moral, to strengthen his moral will. This may not guarantee cent per cent success; but it would surely have the effect of minimizing immoralities issuing from weakness of will. Besides, I think the problem here is a problem regarding the connection between what one believes to be moral and what he is motivated to do. Normally, to accept or believe that *X* is morally desirable is to be motivated to do *X* or act in accordance with *X*, if *X* is a moral principle. Taken in a strict sense and omitting the qualification "normally", it would go in the way of ethical internalism, which sees *a necessary connection* between beliefs and motives. But the inadequacy of internalism is right on the surface, demonstrated by the not so unusual akratic actions coupled with awareness of their immorality. Beliefs and motives are thus not necessarily related. But this is unworrying. For it is possible to salvage a logical or conceptual relation between them by unraveling a weaker sort of logical relation that is weaker than logical necessity but stronger than mere contingent connection. A kind of phenomenon, say pain, need not occur always in the presence of another, namely, pain-behaviour, but it still is logically, i.e., conceptually dependent on pain-behaviour, since, as Wittgenstein so aptly said, if nobody ever behaved as if he/she was in pain, or said he/she ever was, then the word 'pain' would never have found a place in our language. It is thus logically impossible (in the weaker sense of "logically") for pain to occur *always* in the absence of pain behaviour. Evan Simpson makes the point thus:

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* The basic spirit of the argument has been adopted from Professor Prasad, *ibid*, pp. 16–17.

> It is possible to rescue a conceptual connection between beliefs and motives by specifying logical relations weaker than logical

necessitation. We can say, for example, that one kind of thing *logically depends* upon another if it is logically impossible for things of the first kind always to occur in the absence of the second, but logically possible that the first should sometimes occur alone. This is a logical relationship, but unlike necessitation it does not make it logically impossible for the first thing to occur without the second also occurring.[19]

These are instances of that important kind of relation, which are *necessary but defeasible,* and do not, for that reason, cease to be universal and objective. And this more appropriately holds in the case of moral matters. (I have said above that, in a similar way, moral values are necessarily so, though on occasions they may be defeated and overridden by other competing values). I shall therefore go to some extent* with ethical externalism and keep the qualification "normally" to say that moral beliefs and motives for appropriate actions are *normally* related by way of this described weaker logical relation. And that is quite enough to say that, few exceptions notwithstanding, *to accept X as morally desirable is to be motivated to act accordingly*. Because of this, we will be surprised if somebody acts contrary to what he believes to be moral. If this is so, an ethical theory can be *judgmentally* applied[20] in practical situations, for to judge *X* to be right is to decide or be motivated to do *X* or act in accordance with *X*. The cases of akratic weakness are understandable exceptions but could, in principle, be improved upon by moral motivation and persuasion, as we have shown. It would thus depend on the moral reformer how effectively he can persuasionally apply a moral principle to remove the weakness of the agent's will and with how much of success.

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* For I have reasons to believe that both externalism and internalism are inadequate for giving a proper account of the relation between beliefs and motives. This has been argued elaborately in Ch. II of my *Ethics and Society: An Essay on Applied Ethics.*

Anyway, because of factors like exclusive natural division of the *varnas* and a priori assumptions of natural necessitation of them, the *svadharma* theory could not be effectively applied in a consistent manner. On the contrary, a strictly formal and literal adherence to it led, in some cases, to glaring injustices and immoralities. It was grossly unjust for Drona not to accept Eklavya as his disciple just because he was not a *kshatriya,* though he would have made a very worthy disciple and proved to be an equally great archer, if not greater, as Arjuna. It was also equally wrong and unjust not to allow Karṇa—otherwise a man of a great valour and personality—the status of a *kshatriya* prince simply because it was not publicly known that he was a *kshatriya* by birth as much as any of the *pandavas.* The watertight division of the *varnas* and the consequent exclusive *svadharma/paradharma* distinction was not only logically unsound but also socially and culturally unwarranted. One would very naturally wonder (as Prasad does [ibid]), what a great tragedy it would have been for India as well as for the entire world if prince Gautama were to be prevented by a Lord Krishna from becoming a recluse because that was not his *svadharma!*

A good normative ethical theory is viable if it is consistently applicable in all *relevant* cases—*not in all* cases indiscriminately. The *varnadharma* theory was certainly based on sound theoretical considerations of *guna* and *karma* as determinants of right/wrong conducts, but ran into serious practical problems by assuming these to be fixed and *a priori.* As a matter of fact, human nature being what it is, it cannot be assumed to be fixed and static. What is natural for a man is an empirical matter and can be determined only in a probabilistic manner on the basis of what he does and how he behaves. The proponents of the *Varnadharma* theory would have done much better by taking these facts into consideration and allowing justified violations of the theory in reasonably demanding situations. This would surely have led to a better world, a more desirable world.

REFERENCES

1. See, for example, M. Hiriyanna, *Indian Conception of Values* (Kayvalaya Publications, Mysore, 1957), p. 245 and elsewhere.
2. Makenzie, for example, repeatedly says the ethical values are not to be judged on their consistency (See his *Hindu Ethics,* ch.4 and elsewhere.)
3. Dept of Philosophy, Utkal University in association with D.K. Printworld, New Delhi, 1999, p. 261 ff.
4. *Ibid,* p.1022:8. Cited by Prasad, *Varnadharma, Niskama Karma and Practical Morality,* p. 180.
5. This idea of *defeasible* necessity, which I claim to be characteristic of moral values, has been more elaborately argued in my *Ethics and Society: An Essay on Applied Ethics* (Concept, New Delhi, 2008), ch. 3.
6. J.L. Mackie, *Ethics: Inventing Right* and *Wrong* (Penguin Books, London, 1977), p. 82.
7. Ibid. p. 18
8. *The Mahabharat,* vol. I, *Dyutaparva,* p. 898.
9. Ibid. vol. V, ch. 50, p. 4549
10. *Varnadharma, Niskama Karma and Practical Morality,* p. 266.
11. For an interesting discussion on the different ways of applying ethics to practical life, see Prasad, *ibid,* pp. 267–269.
12. The *Mahabharata* puts considerable emphasis on common morality like truth telling, which is claimed to "outweigh a thousand horse sacrifices" (XII.110.29). *Manu Smruti* gives approving assent to this by saying: *"manas satyena siddhyati"* (V.109). More to the point, Hiriyanna cites an incident narrated in the *Ramayana* to show that, though the *varnāśrama-dharmas* are quite obligatory, preference is given to the *sādhāraṇa dharmas*—that the former is possible only on a wider foundation of the latter. The incident relates to Bharata's imploration and pleading for Rama to return and take up his rightful throne. This naturally meant a *conflict* between general obligation like promise keeping (in Rama's case) and obeying the principles of fairness and justice (on Bharata's part), on the one hand, and the special duties like those of a *kṣatriya* and a king. "What can kingly duties do for me", says Bharata, "when I [am made to, PKM] transgress common morality?" *(Ramayana,* XXXX. iv.204.) The *sādhāraṇa dharma* must not be ignored on the pretext of discharging one's *svadharma.* On the contrary, this view holds, it is only when man is true to the former that he can be in a better position to do his duties, and help others to do theirs, in the narrower spheres of life.

13. *"Hato vā prapsysasi swargam, jitvā vā bhoksase mahim // Tasmāt uttistha Kaunteya yuddhāya kruta nischaya"* mocks the theory of *Niskama Kama* and *"Sarva dharmān. parityajya māmekam saraṇam braja // Aham twām sarva papebhya moskhyayisyāmi maa sucha"* eludes persuasion and indoctrination rather than argumentation.
14. *Karma, Causation and Retributive Morality* (ICPR, New Delhi, 1989), p. 253.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid., Ch XVIII, 47.
17. See Sri Aurobindo, *Essays on the Gita,* p. 497 and also Samkara, *Gita Bhasyam,* p. 433; cited by R. Prasad in *Varnadharma, Niskama Karma and Practical Morality,* p. 16.
18. *"Janaṃi dharma na cha me pravrtti // Janamyadharma na cha me nivrtti",* Vidyaranya, *Panchadashi,* 192.176 (cited by Prasad, *ibid.* p. 19).
19. "Between Internalism and Externalism", *Philosophical Quarterly,* Vol. 49, No. 195, April, 1999, p. 203.
20. Courtesy Rajendra Prasad, *Varnadharma, Niskama Karma and Practical Morality,* p. 267.

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Navigation and Ship-building in Ancient India: Orissan Perspective

The science of shipbuilding and navigation was well known to the ancient Indians. The beginning of boat building technology in India can be traced back to the third Millennium BC, i.e. to the Indus Valley Civilization or the Harappān times. The Harappāns constructed the first tidal dock of the world for berthing and servicing of ships at the port town of Lothāl. Ancient Sanskrit and Pāli texts are replete with references to maritime activities and shipping, and ancient Indians, particularly the people from the coastal regions, were having overseas relations with several countries across the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea. Around *c* 500 AD, sextants and mariner's compass were known to ancient Indian shipbuilders and navigators. Āryabhatta (5th century AD) propounded the theory that the earth is spherical which revolves on its own axis as well as round the sun. This proved to be a breakthrough in the art of navigation and contributed immensely in finding the directions in which the sailors desired to sail. J.L. Reid, a member of the Institute of Naval Architects and Shipbuilders, England, in the beginning of the 20th century has got published in the *Bombay Gazetteer* that "The early Hindu astrologers are said to have used the magnet as they still use the modern compass, in fixing the North and East, in laying foundations, and other religious ceremonies. The Hindu compass was an iron fish that floated in a vessel of oil and pointed to the North. The fact of this older Hindu compass seems placed beyond doubt by the Sanskrit word *Maccha-yantra,* or 'fish-machine', which Molesworth gives as a name for the mariner's compass".[1] The technology of boat and ship building in ancient times varies from region to region depending upon the nature and type of crafts, availability of materials, techniques applied by the local ship-builders, specific purposes of the mariners etc.

In the art of ship-building, Kaliṅga (ancient Orissa) played a conspicuous role in ancient times. Inscriptions 'speak of navigation and ship commerce as forming part of the education of the princes of Kaliṅga'.[2] The people of Kaliṅga were the pioneers in the maritime business of India. They are said to have colonized the Irrawady delta in Burma (Myanmar) and various parts of Jāvā.[3] Yet, the references regarding the Kaliṅga ships and ship building industries are meagre and scanty in the available Indian sources. Many scholars have given ample details of the maritime trade and commercial activities of ancient India as a whole, but strictly speaking, the technical details of ship-building, generally of ancient India and particularly of Kaliṅga from construction stage to navigation stage are few and far between. Moreover, whatever details are available have not been analysed properly. In this paper an attempt, thus, has been made to analyse these details technically, though much emphasis has been given to shed the available light on the ships and ship-building of Kaliṅga. Attempt has been made to trace the origin and evolution of boat building technology in India including that of Kaliṅga through the understanding of the prevailing traditions in various parts of India and the boat motifs found on the seals, coins, monuments and manuscripts.

So far as ship-building as an industry is concerned, India has a long and unique tradition. In Indian context, the ancient ship builders had a good knowledge of the materials as well as the varieties of wood used for building of ships. The earliest means of water-transport must have been floating pieces of wood or logs lashed together. Since the time that man ventured out to sea in search of food in the form of fish, there has been evidence in India of human ingenuity in discovering tricks to keep him afloat. Logs of wood and rafts formed the basic contrivances which were floated on rivers in the initial stage, nature's currents providing the propulsion, and the destinations being left to chance.[4] Later, he discovered how to propel in the calm and still waters of lakes by the use of a long pole thrust against the beds at the bottom. Subsequently, oars, paddles and poles were added to the simple rafts, which enabled them to move faster with the stream, to cross it for reaching the opposite bank and to sail against the stream[5]. However, the first known oceanic voyage is that of the Negritos of the Palaeolithic Age who crossed the sea from the mainland of India to the Āṇḍāmān islands in small dug-outs made by hollowing out trunks of trees, and propelled by paddles.[6] It is true that the Negritos may not have aimed at reaching the Āṇḍāmāns. They were probably unaware of its existence, and reached there by chance. What was significant in their sailing was that they propelled themselves on the surface of the sea for over 700 miles. But this description may not be accepted as authentic because of the paucity of data. The reliable evidences regarding shipping and ship-building, hence, can be traced to the Proto-historic Indus Valley Civilization.

From the discovery of the Indus Valley civilization we have the evidence of boats and ships of a much more improved design than the primitive hallowed logs. E. Mackay[7] says that boat building must be included among the crafts of the Indus people whose chief interest was trade being close to a large navigable river (Indus). There are two representations of boats from Moheñjodāro (Fig.1 & 2). The first one of the two is on a pottery piece, which besides the figure of a steersman shows both the ends high and a mast in the centre apparently of two yards. B. Srivastava[8] says that the boat or ship of this type was not only suitable for river-traffic but for the sea-voyages also. The second one is of a simple boat engraved upon a seal amulet and has no mast. It shows a sharp upturned prow and stern, a cabin in the middle and a steersman seated at the stern. Again B. Srivastava[9] says that this was exclusively, used for river-traffic. The representation of a complete boat painting with a sail on a potsherd indicate that by that time India knew the use of sail and steering oars (Fig. 3). S.R. Rao[10] describes that 'it has a sharp keel, a pointed prow and a blunt stern.'

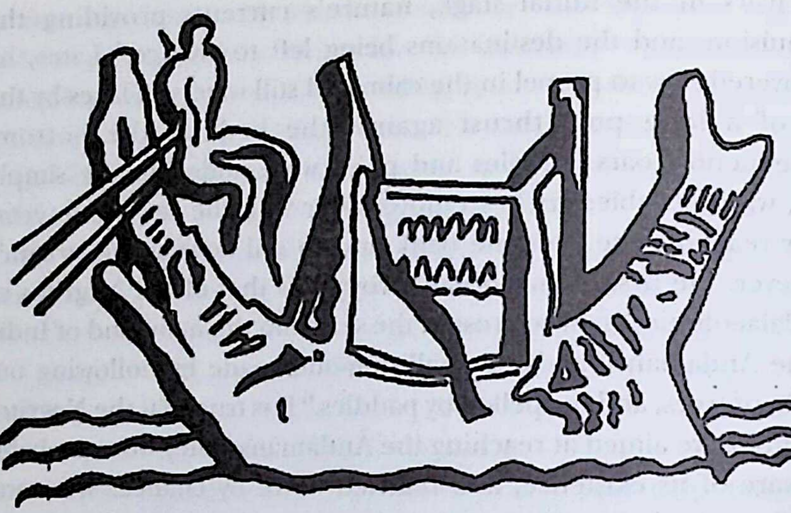


Fig. 1: Moheñjodāro Boat.

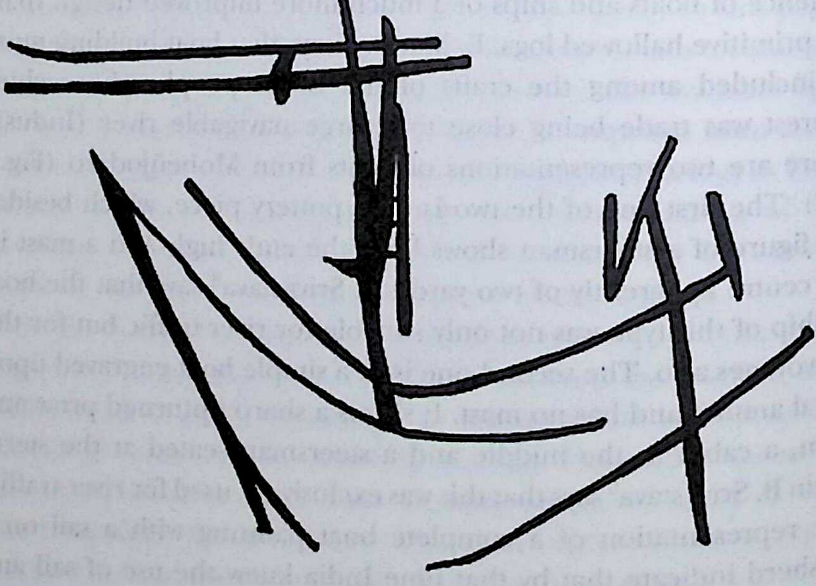


Fig. 2: Moheñjodāro Boat.

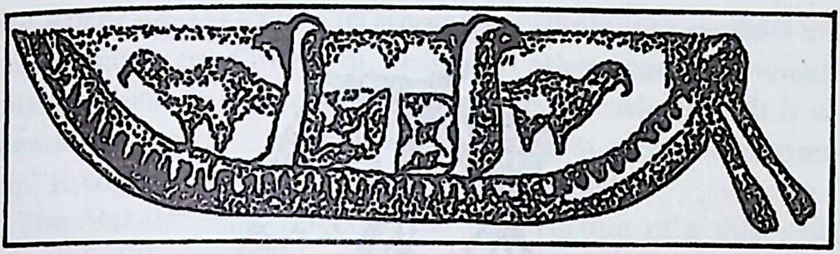


Fig. 3: A Moheñjodāro terracotta boat with a cabin in the middle and direction giving birds.

The discovery of Lothāl port and the dock (in 1955), however, substantially corroborate to the shipping and ship-building activities of the Harappāns. At Lothāl (near Saragwala village about fifty miles southwest of Ahmedābād in Gujrāt) a trapezoid reservoir measuring on an average 214 m x 36 m has been excavated, and has been identified as a dockyard. It is riveted on all four sides with continuous dry masonry burnt-brick walls. The structure was stratigraphically connected to the old riverbed of Sābarmatī. Towards the southern end there is a broad and relatively shallow gap. This has been supposed to be the inlet channel of the dock. Leading from the southern wall is a narrow brick water passage, said to have functioned as a spill channel, when fitted with a sluice-gate. According to S.R. Rao,[11] the dock has been used in two stages, at the first stage it was designed to allow ships 18–20 metres long and 4–6 metres wide. It was so designed that at least two ships could simultaneously pass and enter easily. In the second stage, the inlet channel was narrowed to accommodate large ships but only single ships with flat bottoms could enter. Lothāl, with its large market and a busy dock, was a great emporium where goods from neighboring towns and villages, such as Raṅgpur, Kath etc. were sold in exchange for imported and locally manufactured ones. The unearthing of the dockyard at Lothāl, in fact, is a clear evidence to prove that the Harappāns were good mariners, overseas traders and ship builders. Apart from the dockyard, five terracotta boat models were also found from Lothāl of which two represents boats with sail (Fig. 4). Besides Lothāl dockyard, the Harappāns had some other ports along its 1300 km

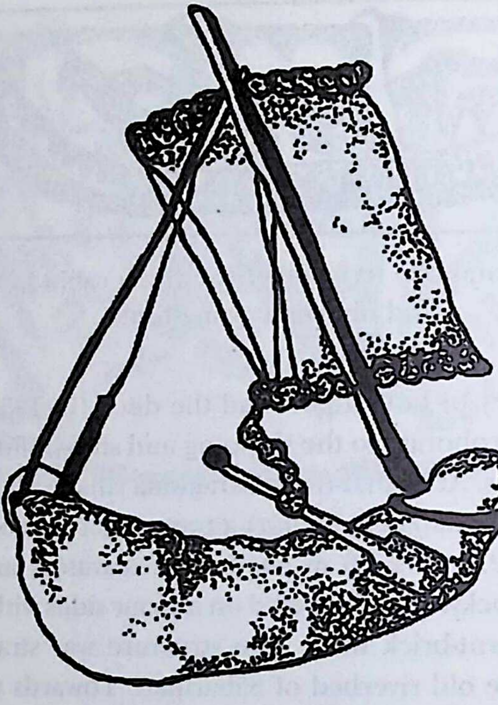


Fig. 4: A terracotta Lothāl Boat with a Sail.

long coastline stretched between Sutkagendor (Pakistan) in the north and Bhagatrav (southern Gujrāt) in the south.[12]

The Vedic literature is replete with references to boats, ships and sea voyages. In the *Ṛgveda*[13] it is described how Bhujya, son of king Tugra along with his followers was picked up by the twin Aśvins in their hundred oared galley, which indicates that such large ships were definitely in use. The *Ṛgveda* mentions *Nāva* (ship) and *Nau* (boat or ship). *Nāva*[14] stands for big boats or ships. *Nau*[15] stands for simple boat for crossing rivers. It was simple in construction plyable only by oars (*aritra*). The *Ṛgveda*[16] also refers to another type of boat called *Plava* which was perhaps a war ship and of complicated construction. The *Vajasaneha Samhitā* mentions a ship equipped with hundred oars and refers to the crew as *aritrī, nāvaja* and parts of boat such as *naumaṇḍa* (anchor) and *sambina* (propelling pole).[17] Here it is significant to mentions that the term navigation is derived from the Sanskrit word *nau* which generally stands for 'boat'. The word *nau* or *nāva* as well as its synonym or diminutive *naukā* is even now commonly used in Hindi, Oriyā and other cognate languages. Thus *nāvi gatih* (going in a boat) amounts to navigation. It is also noteworthy that the Sanskrit term *yāna pātra*, which connotes a 'ship' is comparable to the English term 'vessel'.

The *Mahābhārata*[18] refers to the construction of a ship which rescued the *Pāṇḍava* brothers from the inevitable destruction in the lac house. The ship was of a large size, provided with machinery and all kinds of weapons of war, and able to defy storms and waves. The *Rāmāyaṇa*[19] mentions the march of 500 well built ships with *Swastika* signs which had gay flags, full sails and were fitted with large gongs. The Buddhist and Jain sources also throw ample light on the ships and their building techniques of ancient India. The *Samudda Vāṇija Jātaka*[20] speaks of a ship which could accommodate one thousand families of carpenters. The *Vālāhāssa Jātaka*[21] refers to a shipwreck which carried five hundred merchants. The Pāli work *Rājavalliya* mentions vessels that could accommodate as many as 700 passengers. The *Śankha Jātaka*[22] refers to a ship with three masts, 800 cubits (1,300 ft) length, 600 cubits (1,000 ft) width and 20 fathoms deep. The description, thus, gives us an idea of the enormous size of the ships that were built in India in those days. We also get an idea of ship building from a description of the vessel carrying the Tooth-relic of the Buddha from Tāmralipti to Ceylon.[23] The *Dāthā dhātu vamśa* which contains this narration refers to the ship used by Dantakumār and Hemamālā to Ceylon as 'firmly constructed with planks (*Padārani*), sewed together with ropes (*Yottāni*), having a well-rigged, lofty mast, with a spacious sail, and commanded by a skillful navigator'.[24] Such types of ships carried on a regular and ceaseless traffic between the port of Tāmralipti and the island of Ceylon.[25] The *Bāveru Jātaka*, the *Supparaka Jātaka*, the *Mahājanaka Jātaka* and the Ceylonese chronicles i.e. the *Dipavaṁśa* and the *Mahāvaṁśa* also refers to ships and overseas voyages undertaken by the ancient Indian merchants to distant lands. The sea-going vessel was sometimes known as *Poya*, *Poyavāhana*, *Pavāhana.* Sometimes the ship was named after the person concerned or any other proper name.[26] The *Mahāvagga*[27] enumerates three types of boats such as

(i) *nāva* (big boat), (ii) *lumper* (small boat), and (iii) *kulla* (a small boat used in the harbours). From the Buddhist *Jātakas* it is known that in the post-Vedic period *nāva* was generally applied for means of water transport. The distinction between a river boat and an ocean-going vessel was made only by using the terms like *nāva* and *mahānāva* respectively. The Jain works also provide us some important information regarding the varieties of ships. The *Āvaśyaka Chūrni* refers to the ships, known as *Vārivrisabha* which sailed from Mathurā to Saurāṣhtra. The ships made their onward journey by the force of wind; they were fitted with oars and rudders (*Valayabaha*), sails and anchors. The pilot (*nirṇamāka*) piloted the ship.[28] The *Nisitha Bhāsya* refers to four types of boats. Those which went along the current of the river called (*anulomāgāmini*), which sailed against the current called *Pratilomāgāmini*, which sailed from one shore to another easily called *tiryak-Samtarini* and which sailed in the ocean called *Samudragāmini*.[29] The *Aṅgavijjā*, under the heading "*Janajoni*" furnish an important list of boats and ships of different sizes which includes the names of *nāva, pota, koṭṭimba, sālikā, tappaka, plava, piṇḍikā, kaṭṭha, velū, tumba, kumbha and dati*.[30] A ship generally had one mast (*kūpaka*), but sometimes, had two or three.[31] The use of anchors (*lakaro* or *lankaro*) is also referred to in the *Jātakas*.[32]

The ships were managed by the pilots. From the *Avadānaśataka*[33] it is known that big ships were managed by pilots of five grades. The *Aṣṭādhyāyi* of Pāṇini refers to some types of boats such as *Utsaṅga* (a kind of small dug out boat), *Utpata* (a longish fishing boat), *Udupa* (small boats) etc.[34] Hence, the literatures of the post Vedic period, though in the fragmented form supply us abundant information regarding the ships and their construction. As per the evidences of these sources, the referred boats and ships on the basis of their size can be categorized into two groups, i.e. *Mahānāva* or big vessels for use in rivers and ocean throughout the year and *kṣudrikā* or small boats for use in small and shallow rivers that once flowed in the rains.[35]

During the Mauryan age ship-building in India was a regular and flourishing industry.[36] R.K. Mookerji[37] says, 'the stimulus to its development must have come from the demands of both river and ocean traffic.' The ship-building industry, was, however, in the hands of the state and was a Government monopoly.[38] The ship-builders were salaried public servants and were not permitted to work for any private person.[39] A host of Greek writers like Megāsthenes, Arrian, Pliny, Diodorus, Curtius etc. throw welcome light on the ships of that period. Arrian informs us that Xathroian autonomous tribe living on the Indus supplied Alexander during the time of his return voyage with thirty oared galleys and trading vessels which were built by them.[40] Pliny again refers to an interesting description of shipping and navigation. He says "the sea between the island of Ceylon and India is full of shallows not more than six paces in depth, but in some channels so deep that no anchors can find the bottom. For this reason, ships were built with prows at each end, for turning about in channels of extreme narrowness."[41] This description reflects some techniques of ship-building in ancient India. Pliny mentions that some of the ships of this era weighed 3,000 amphoras or 75 tonnes.[42] Megāsthenes, the Greek ambassador to the court of Chandragupta Maurya refers to a "Board of Admiralty", one of the six Boards of the war office of emperor.[43] The popularity and the development of national shipping perhaps necessitate for the creation of such a Board. Kauṭilya[44] in agreement with Megāsthenes also mentions that the ship was under an officer called *Nāvadhyakṣa* (Superintendent of ships) who was concerned not only with the navigation of ocean, but also with inland river transport. According to the utility, Kauṭilya classified the boats and ships under four groups, i.e., (i) *Potavaṇika* (commercial fleet), (ii) *Svanāva* (Private boats), *Rājanau* (Royal boat), and *Himsrikā* (warships).

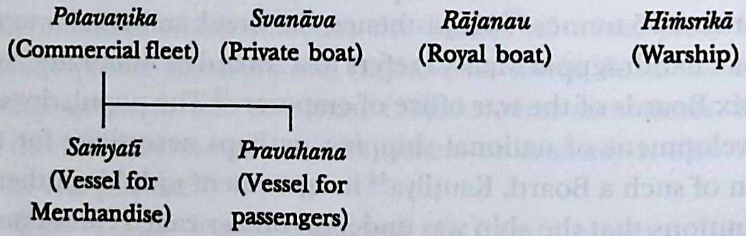
Potavaṇika or commercial fleet again was divided into *Samyāti* (for merchandise) and *Pravahana* (for passengers). *Saṁyātināva* was an ocean-going commercial vessel used specially for merchandise. However, during emergency the military supplies were also carried on in such vessel. It had to pay tolls at the harbours which it touched.

Pravahana was a sea-going vessel used for carrying passengers. It is mentioned in the commentary on *Uttarādhyāyanasutraṭikā* that the sea-going merchants or passengers crossed the ocean in *Pravahans.*[45]

Svanāva (private boat) were ferry boats belonging to private persons. These boats were allowed to cross the river at all times and places. These boats have been called by P.C. Prasad[46] as *Svataranāni.*

Rājanau or the royal boat was of two types, i.e., *Svastika* and *Śaṁkhamuktāgrāhina. Śvastika* was manned by trustworthy sailors. It had to be tagged on to another boat for the safety of the king. *Śaṁkhamuktāgrāhina* was also a royal boat. It was used for pearl fishing in various parts of the ocean. It was also let out to private individuals on payment of the necessary fee called *Nauhataka. Hiṁsrikā* was a warship of the naval force.

CLASSIFICATION OF BOATS AND SHIPS BY KAUTILYA



From this narration it can be concluded that the Mauryan period marked an epoch making era in the sphere of shipping and shipbuilding technology. The naval tradition which the Mauryans had built up, however, was kept alive in at least some of the kingdoms like the Āndhra or Sātavāhāna kingdom in the south, and the Kuṣhāṇa kingdom in the north. In Tāmil, the ship was known as *Kalam* (vessel), more often as *mara-Kalam* (*mara* means wood and *Kalam* means vessel).[47] In the Sangam literature several classes of ships and boats are mentioned. They are *Ambi, Pahri, Odam, Paḍagu* and *Timil.*[48] Of these *Ambi* and *Paḍagu* are small crafts mainly for river navigation. *Timil* was a small fishing boat. The remaining two were sea going vessels.[49] The author of the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* refers to various types of boats and ships both on the West and East coast of India. He has referred to ships and boats as *trappaga* (large type of fishing boat), *coṭymbā* (modern *Koṭiā* type boat), *saṅgara* (boat suitable for coastal traffic-middle size boat), *Kolaṇḍiophonṭā* or *Kolaṇḍiā* (ocean going vessels or boat for overseas) etc. Among those the *trappaga* and *coṭymbā* were pilot boats used to guide the foreign ships coming to Bharukaccha through the entrance of the river, on which the emporium of Bharukachha or Barygaza stood.[50] *Trappaga* was a large type of fishing boat and *coṭymbā* may be the modern *Koṭiā* type of boat. The *Saṅgara* type of craft was made of single logs bound together and used for sailing in the sea.[51] However, it seems to have been used merely for coastal traffic.[52] It was a middle size boat and was called *Mājjhima kāya*. The *Kolaṇḍiophonṭā* or *Kolaṇḍiā* types of boats were the ocean going vessels and were of great bulk. Such types of boats were employed for voyages between the Coromaṇḍal coast on the one hand and the Gangetic delta and *Chryse* on the other. The *Kolaṇḍiā* type of boats may be called the ships of Kaliṅga.[53]

The *Brihatsamhitā* has indirect references to shipping and maritime commerce of ancient Indians. One such passage refers to the existence of shippers and sailors as a class, whose health is said to have been influenced by moon.[54] The *Amarakoṣha* of Amarasimha also refers to various types of boats and ships such as *pota, nau, taraṇī tarī* and *udupa*. The *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* refers to an ill-fated ship sailing on a great ocean.

The Beṅgali poet Bansidās in his *Manasāmaṅgala* has given us information regarding the technique of making vessels for the sea-journey. He informs us that strong pieces of timber (*Jhokabāri*) were joined together with the help of iron-nails to construct the hold of the ship. The metallic sheets were fitted and the decorated prow was made. After the deck (*pāṭātan*) had been composed of wooden planks, the chief cabin (*Rāighar*) along with smaller ones was built. The mast was duly fitted on the vessel. The helm (*pāṭwāl*) and its auxiliary piece of timber were not forgotten.[55] The *Manasāmaṅgala* also refers to different parts of the vessel such as *dāra* (helm), *mālumkāṣṭha* (mast), *tala* (hold), *mathākāṣṭha* (prow), *chhaighar* (shed), *pāṭātan* (deck), *daṇḍakerwāl* (oar), *phāns* (chord), *naṅgar* (anchor), *pāl* (sail) and *dārā* (keel).[56] The wood of various classes of trees, such as *śāl, tāl, kānṭhāl, piāl, gambhāri* and *tamāl* were used for ship-building.[57] The *Chaṇḍikāvya* mentions several kinds of ships. The *Tiāthuti, Sukapankhī, Mayurpankhī, Pakṣhirāja* resembling *makara* are found in the old Beṅgali literature.[58] The vessels, besides the captain and crew also used to carry carpenters, blacksmiths, craftsmen, soldiers and admirals for the safety of the boat, cargo and passengers. The *Charyapadas* mention about the helms, oars, masts, sail and wheels.[59] However, these literary evidences which give us different pictures of boats and ships cannot serve our purposes in accurately reconstructing the types of ships and their building technology of ancient India.

To corroborate the literary evidences, we have also some direct evidences from the archaeological excavations, in art specimens and on coins. Such representations of ancient Indian ships and boats, not only substantiate the evidence in the literature, but also provide us with details about their construction.[60] The depiction of boats and ships in the art media, in fact, represents the crafts used in those days. The excavations conducted by the Deccan college, Pune at Inamgaon (Mahārāṣhtra) yielded evidence to prove the existence of riverine transportation and communication.[61] The ancient site of Inamgaon yielded three phases of Chalcolithic burial culture namely the Malwa, the Jorwe and the late Jorwe and interestingly from all these three phases boat design painted pots have been reported. Apart from the boat designs found on the burial pots, Inamgaon excavation also yielded a jetty.[62] Another rock painting datable to early historical period is noticed at Charmārdi in the Bhāvnagar district of Gujrāt. The picture has two sail boats and it is believed that this is the first picture in India which exhibits the sea going ships.[63] In the opinion of Erwin Neumayer[64] the sail boats of Charmārdi have all the features of sea going vessels and probably such type of ships were used by the Indians in maritime trade with western countries. The finding of a Rouletted pot shred with ship motif engraving (c. 2nd Century BC) is reported from the excavation at Alagankulam in the Rāmanāthapuram district of Tāmil Nāḍu. Excavations at Chandraketugarh, 24 Parganās district of West

Beṅgal yielded two seals having ship motifs. The first ship portrayed on the seal consists of three masts while the second one is having single mast. It is worth mentioning that the ships portrayed on the Chandraketugarh seals resembles the ships depicted on the Sātavāhāna coins. From the excavations at Koṭāsur (long. 87⁰46'N; lat 23⁰58'E) in the Birbhum district of West Beṅgal two coins having ship/boat motif were found.[65] The Pallavas of Kānchi also issued coins having ship motifs on their reverse which resembles the ships represented on the Sātavāhāna coins. The ship type coins of the Pallavas of Kānchi were assigned to the reign of Rājasiṁha and Nandivarman who probably issued these to mark their sway over the overseas trade.[66] At Dharaṇikotā, on the bank of the river Kṛṣṇā, excavations have unearthed a wooden wharf raised on post-holes. Archaeologically it has been dated to the second-first centuries BC.[67] At Arikāmedu, on the river Ariyankuppam, it has been suggested that the brick-walls of the warehouse served as a dock.[68] At Kāverīpāṭṭinam, on the bank of the Kāverī, the wharf was built of large-sized bricks and lined with wooden poles for anchoring boats. Radiocarbon dating of the wood has given its date as the third century BC.[69] The use of the anchor, however, was known to the Indus Valley people, as testified by the discovery of a seal with the depiction of an anchor (Fig. 5). The archaeological excavations done at Māṇikpāṭṇā on the Chilikā mouth, at Khālkaṭṭāpāṭṇā on the bank of the river Kushabhadrā etc. testified to the importance of these

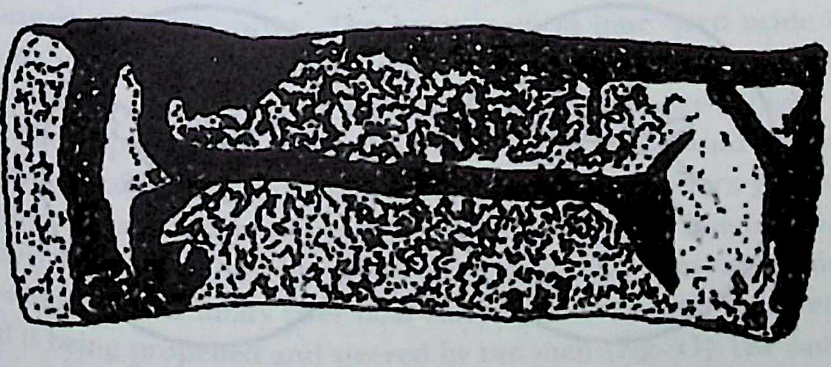
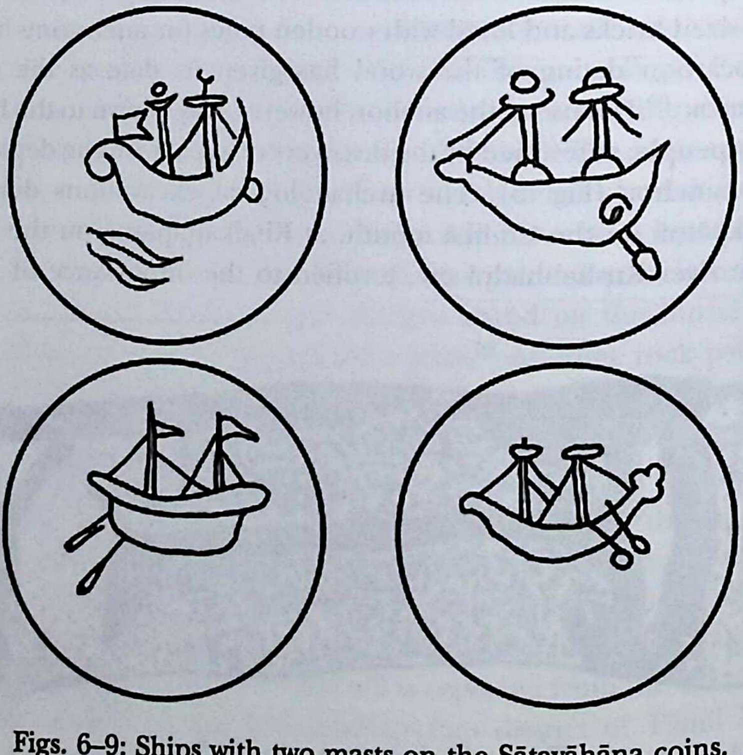


Fig. 5: Anchor on an Indus Seal

sites as the suitable halting place for the riverine as well as sea-going boats and vessels.

The ships and boats have been depicted on the coins. In the early historical period, a distinctive local coinage was being minted in several regions of the east coast of India. A unique series of punch-marked coins have been obtained from the sites of Chandraketugarh in the Gaṅgā delta. These coins show for the first time the use of ship symbol. These coins are datable to the Mauryan period.[70] In the second century AD the Sātavāhāna monarchs introduced a series of coins with the ship symbols. The ships depicted in the Sātavāhāna coins had two masts (Figs. 6–9). Boats are also depicted in the sculptural representations. The sculptures of Bharhut, Sānchi *Stūpa*, Bodhgayā, Amarāvatī and paintings at Ajantā, Ellorā, Auraṅgābād etc. contain the boats of different sizes and varied nature. The Indian sculptures outside India in Jāvā at Borobudur and at other places also depict the boats. The earliest



Figs. 6–9: Ships with two masts on the Sātavāhāna coins.

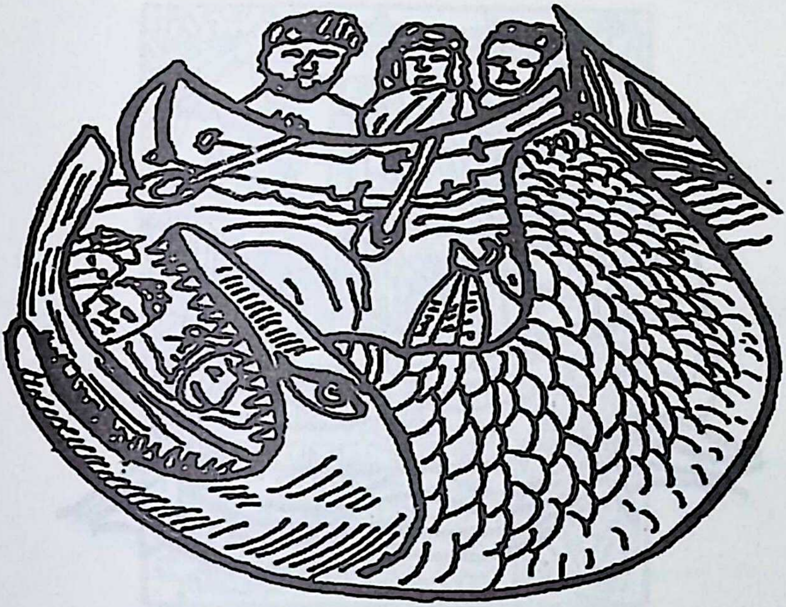


Fig. 10: An earliest boat (2nd CBC), Bharhut.

representations of a boat datable to the second century BC is found from Bharhut[71] (Fig. 10). The sculpture shows two boats, with three sailors in each. One of the two boats, along with its crew is being swallowed by a big fish with rows of serrated teeth, probably representing a sea-monster. The crew of the other boat look stunned by this calamity and has stopped rowing, as evidenced by the idle oars seen on the starboard side. From the depiction of such calamity that has befallen the boat; the depicted boats could not be accepted as ocean-worthy. The boats seem to have been made of planks joined with dowels. Of the two, one is deep and short and the other long and low, though the prow of the latter is high.

The representation of boats and ships are found in the sculptures of Sānchi. One of the sculptures on the eastern gateway of No.1 *stūpa* at Sānchi represents a canoe made up of rough planks rudely sewn together by hemp or string. The representation, however, is an ordinary river boat carrying in the centre an ascetic and is being propelled and steered by two men (Fig. 11).The same eastern gateway has also representation of another boat (Fig. 12).

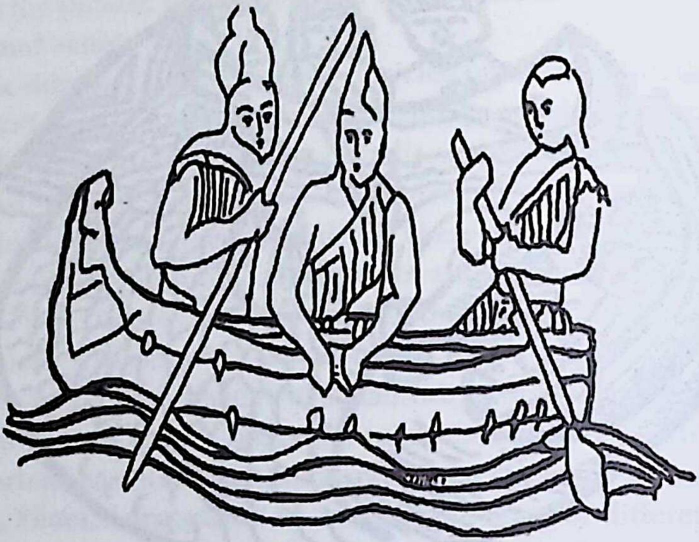


Fig. 11: An ordinary river boat, Eastern gateway of No. 1 Stūpa at Sānchi.

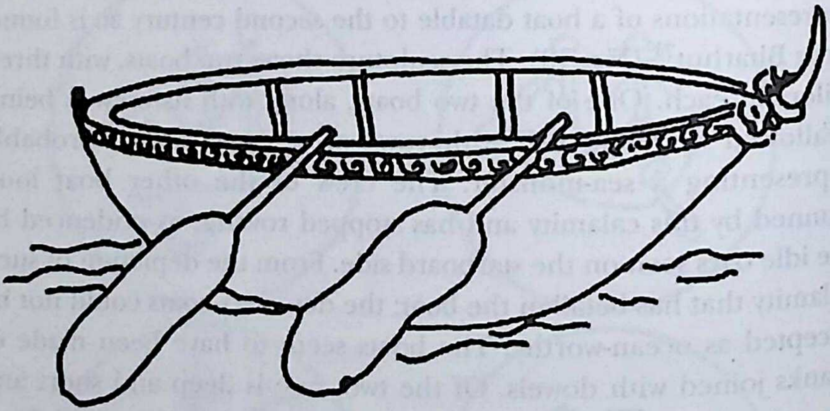


Fig. 12. A boat in the Eastern Gateway of Sānchi Stūpa.

On the western gateway of the Sānchi *Stūpa* there is an interesting sculptured representation of a boat which represents 'a piece of water, with a barge floating on it whose prow is formed by a winged gryphon (*śārdula*) (with a beaked nose) and stern by a fish's tail.' The barge contains a pavilion overshadowing a vacant throne, over

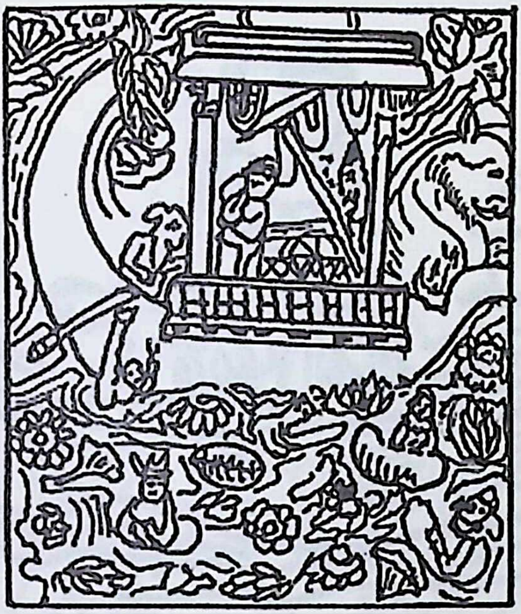


Fig. 13: A boat in the Western gateway of Sānchi Stūpa.

which a male attendant holds a *chatta*, while another man has a *chaori*, a third man is steering or propelling the vessel with a large paddle. In the water are fresh water flowers and buds and a large shell; and there are five men floating about, holding on by spars and inflated skins, while a sixth appears to be asking the occupant of the stern of the vessel for help out of the water[72] (Fig. 13). R.K. Mookerji[73] says this sculpture appear simply to represent the royal state barge. Owing to the location of the cabin in the middle it would fall under the class of *Madhyamandirā* type vessels of the *Yuktikalpataru*.[74] Curiously enough only one sailor is to be seen in this boat. A canoe shaped boat carved out of a log of wood is seen on one of the sculptures of Bodhagayā. The boat could accommodate at least three persons. When in shallow waters, such boats were propelled with a pole (Fig. 14). The Amarāvatī sculpture, however, provides with another variety[75] (Fig. 15). The barge has rectangular shape with a flat bottom and has an empty throne at the centre. In front of the throne there is a suppliant figure with folded hands. However, surprisingly the depicted boats and ships on the

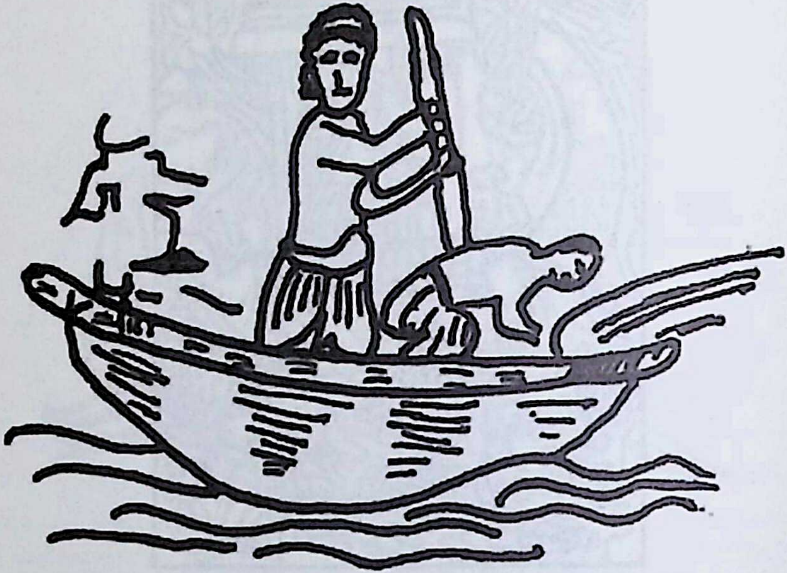


Fig. 14: A boat in the Bodhgayā sculpture.

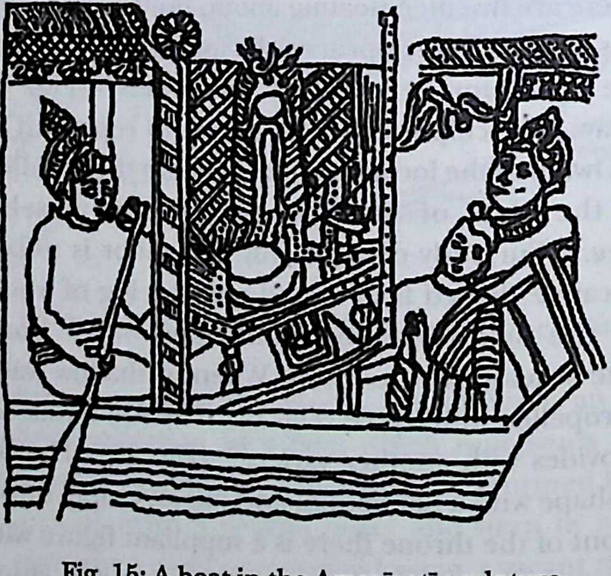


Fig. 15: A boat in the Amarāvatī sculpture.

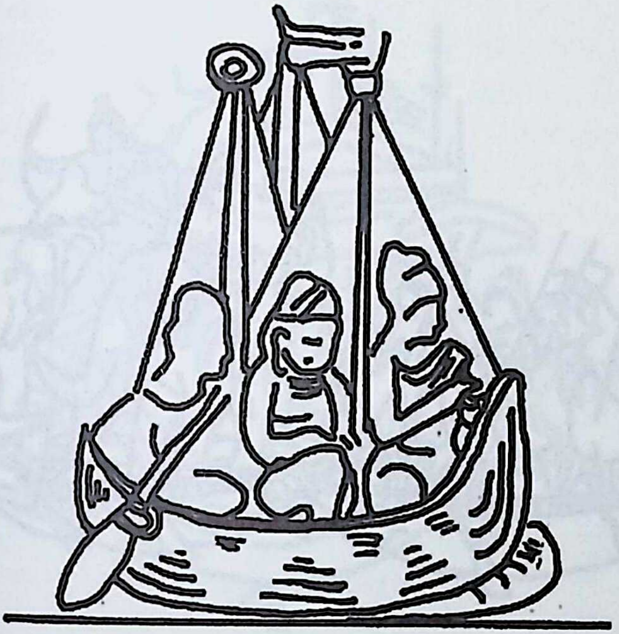


Fig. 16: A ship at Aurangābād having three masts.

above referred to sculptures do not show the sails and masts. The Sātavāhāna coins (Figs. 6–9), sculptures at Borobudur and Ajantā, Auraṅgābād cave paintings acquaint us with the representation of masts and sails in the boats and ships. The ship portrayed on in Auraṅgābād cave has three masts supported by stays, the foremost being larger than the mizzen[76] (Fig. 16). But the most elaborate illustration of Indian vessels appears in the Ajantā paintings.

A depiction in cave XVII of Ajantā shows three ships carrying elephants and horses[77] (Fig. 17). Another illustration in the same cave shows a three-masted vessel, the masts being placed in the front half rather than being distributed equally over its length[78] (Fig. 18). A painting in the cave No.1 shows instead of the usual rigging and structures, a pavilion in the middle of the ship (Fig. 19). The construction of such a ship would make the ship top heavy and have presumably little semblance to reality.[79] The Ajantā paintings also depict emperor's pleasure boat which as per the description of the *Yuktikalpataru* is of the *Madhyamandirā* type (Fig. 20). Such

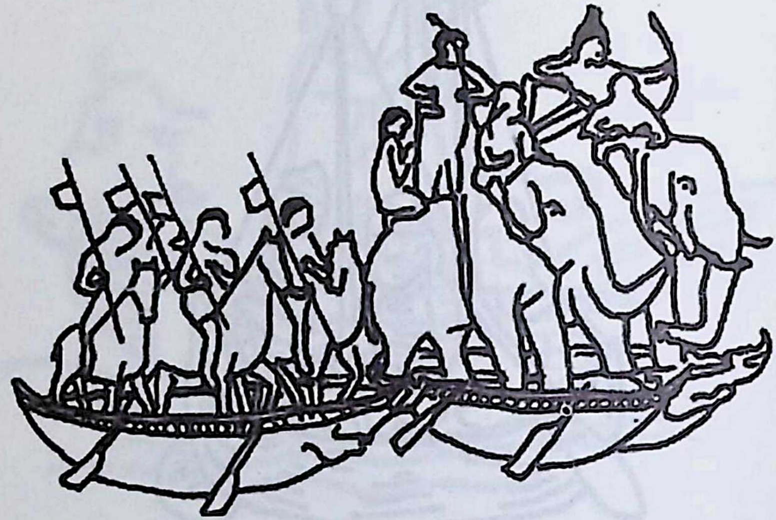


Fig. 17: Ships in the Ajantā Wall Paintings carrying elephants & horses.

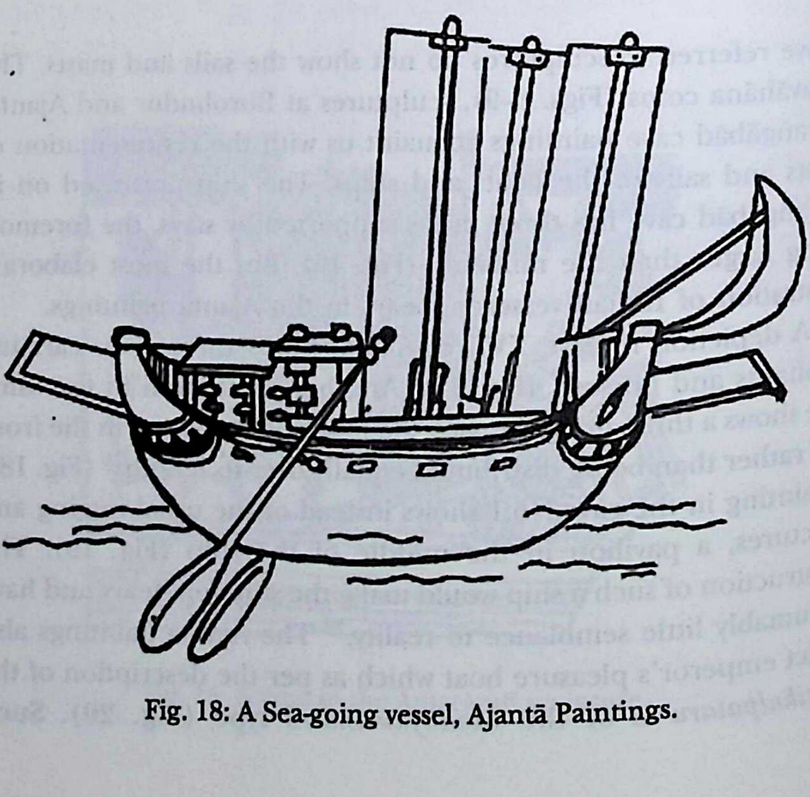


Fig. 18: A Sea-going vessel, Ajantā Paintings.

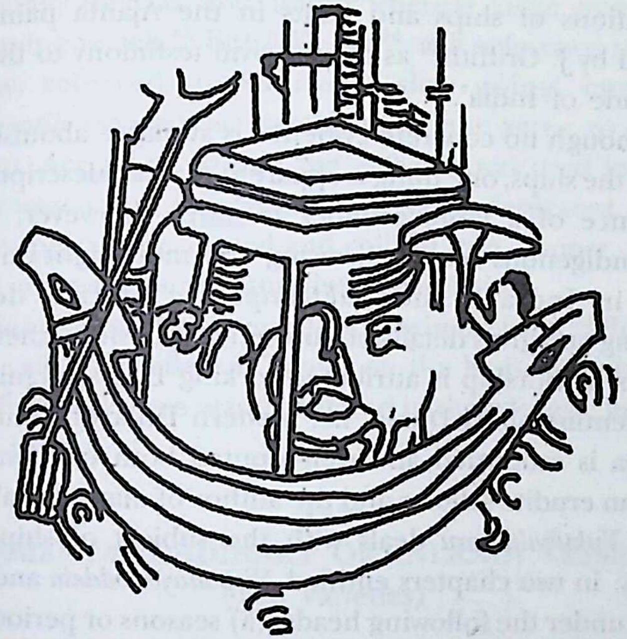


Fig. 19: A ship with a pavilion in the middle, Ajantā Paintings

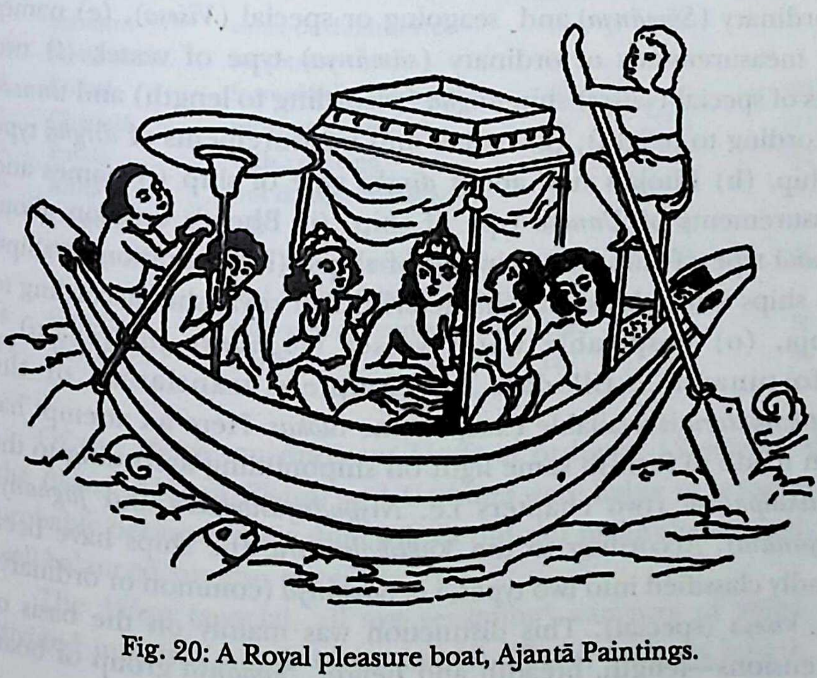


Fig. 20: A Royal pleasure boat, Ajantā Paintings.

representations of ships and boats in the Ajantā paintings are interpreted by J. Griffith[80] as only a 'vivid testimony to the ancient foreign trade of India'.

Even though no concrete evidence is available about the shape and size of the ships, one thing is apparent that the description shows the existence of a large number of ships. However, the most surviving indigenous record throwing enormous light on the shipbuilding in India is the *Yuktikalpataru*[81] which deals with shipbuilding and gives details of various types of ships, their size and fortune. Its authorship is attributed to king Bhoja reigning in the eleventh century AD in Dhara, i.e. modern Dhar of Central India. King Bhoja is renowned and well-reputed both in literature and history as an erudite scholar and the author of many valuable works. His work *Yuktikalpataru* deals with the subject of ship building elaborately in two chapters entitled *Niṣpadayānoddeśa* and *Jaghanya Jalayānāni* under the following heads: (a) seasons or periods suitable for shipbuilding, (b) varieties of woods best suited for the construction of ships, (c) Bhoja's injunction regarding the tying of iron nail to a sea-going vessel, (d) classification of ships- river going or ordinary (*Sāmānya)* and seagoing or special (*Viśeṣa*), (e) names and measurements of ordinary (*sāmānya*) type of vessel, (f) two types of special (*viśeṣa*) ship-*dīrghā* (according to length) and *unnatā* (according to height), (g) names and measurements of *dīrghā* type of ship, (h) Bhoja's view about *dīrghā* type of ship (i) names and measurements of *Unnatā* type of ship, (j) Bhoja's opinion about *Unnatā* type of ship, (k) painting of ships, (l) decoration of ships, (m) ships with cabins, (n) characteristics of royal ship according to Bhoja, (o) despicable water vessel (*Jaghanya jalayānāni*).[82] Unfortunately , till date no complete translation of the *Yuktikalpataru* is available except some *Ślokas.* Here an attempt has been made to furnish some light on shipbuilding according to the *Yuktikalpataru* (two chapters i.e. *Niṣpadayānoddeśa* and *Jaghanya Jalayānāni*). According to the *Yuktikalpataru,* the ships have been broadly classified into two types, i.e. *Sāmānya* (common or ordinary) and *Viśeṣa* (special). This distinction was mainly on the basis of dimensions—length, breadth and height. *Sāmānya* group of boats were generally used as river traffic, whereas *Viśeṣa* group of ships were sea-going vessels.[83] But A.K. Bag[84] with reference to '*śloka* 95' which has referred to *mantharā* (slow going, curved) and *ambudhaugatiḥ* (sea going) vessels does not agree to the above assignment. According to him the *Sāmānya* was used in the sense that these were cargo ships and not specially decorated. The *Viśeṣa* types were specially decorated and coils of iron, copper, gold, lead, stone etc. were used in decorative construction.

The *Sāmānya* group of vessels comprised of ten different types of vessels called by different names on the basis of their size. R.K. Mookerji[85] says all these vessels differed in their length, breadth and depth or height.

Table-I
SĀMĀNYA (ORDINARY OR INLAND) VESSELS
(Ten varieties)

Sl. No.	Name of vessels	English equivalents	Dimensions Length in cubits	Breadth in cubits	Height in cubits
1.	Kṣhudrā	small or diminutive	16	4	4
2.	Madhyamā	moderate	24	12	8
3.	Bhimā	formidable, tremendous	40	20	20
4.	Chapalā	moving to and fro	48	24	24
5.	Patalā	with covering	64	32	32
6.	Abhayā	not dangerous, fearless	72	36	36
7.	Dīrghā	tall	88	44	44
8.	Patrapuṭā	like bolded or doubled leaf in the form of a cup	96	48	48
9.	Garbharā	with inner compartments	112	56	56
10.	Mantharā	curved	120	60	60

Of the above ten different kinds of ordinary (*Sāmānya*) ships, the *Bhimā, Abhayā (Bhayā)* and *Garbharā* were liable to bring ill-luck probably because, their dimensions did not make them steady and well-balanced on the water.[86]

The *Viśeṣa* (special, all are sea-going) category of ships were divided into two sub-divisions i.e. (i) *Dīrghā,* after its length, and

(ii) *Unnatā*, after its height.[87] The *Dīrghā* and *Unnatā* classes of ships were further divided into ten and five sub-classes respectively.

Table-II
DĪRGHĀ TYPE OF VESSELS
(Ten varieties, according to length)

Sl. No.	Name of vessels	English equivalents	Dimensions Length in cubits	Breadth in cubits	Height in cubits
1.	Dīrghikā	tall	32	4	3
2.	Taraṇī	moving hither and thither	48	6	4
3.	Lolā	moving higher and thither	64	8	6
4.	Gatvarā	perishable	80	10	8
5.	Gāminī	going and moving on	96	12	9
6.	Tarī	running swiftly	112	14	11
7.	Jaṅghālā	running swiftly	128	16	12
8.	Plāvinī	flowing over	144	18	14
9.	Dhāriṇī	power of possessing	160	20	16
10.	Veginī	having velocity & move with speed	176	22	17

Of these ten varieties of *Dīrghā* ships those that brought ill-luck were *Lolā, Gāminī,* and *Plāvinī.*

Table-III
UNNATĀ TYPE OF VESSELS
Five varieties (Height main feature)

Sl. No.	Name of vessels	English equivalents	Dimensions Length in cubits	Breadth in cubits	Height in cubits
1.	Ūrddhvā	Elevated	32	16	16
2.	Anūrddhvā	non-elevated	48	24	24
3.	Svarṇamukhī	golden-faced	64	32	32
4.	Garbhiṇī	power of being filled with	80	40	40
5.	Mantharā	slow-going, curved	96	48	48

Of these five varieties, *Anūrddhvā*, *Garbhiṇī*, and *Mantharā* brought misfortune and *Ūrddhvā* good luck to kings.[88]

In the *Yuktikalpataru* interesting details are given about the cabins of ships. A few ships were fitted with cabins. The ships with cabins were of three types—*Sarvamandirā*, *Madhyamandirā* and *Agramandirā*. The ship having cabin extending from one end to other was called *Sarvamandirā* and it was used for the transport of royal treasure, horses and women. The ship having a cabin in the middle was called *Madhyamandirā* and was suitable in the rainy season and for pleasure trips of kings. The ship having a cabin in the front was called *Agramandirā* and was convenient in dry seasons without rains, for long voyages and naval warfare. The ship having a cabin less than half of its length becomes swift in speed.[89]

The *Yuktikalpataru* also gives an elaborate description of the wood to be used in the construction of ships and propounds the merits and demerits of different kinds of wood. Regarding the use of metals in ship construction the work recommends four kinds of metal viz., gold, silver, copper, and the compound of all three, but forbids the utilization of iron, particularly for joining up the ship's sides and bottom. The iron will inevitably expose them to the influence of magnetic rocks in the sea, or bring them within a magnetic field and so lead them to risks. Hence, the planks of bottoms are to be fitted together or mortised by means of substances other than iron.[90] It is also clear from this passage (*śloka* 88) that nailed vessels were known to the Indians.[91]

In *Vrikṣha-Āyurveda* (the science of plant life, 1st CAD) according to king Bhoja there are reference to about four classes of distinguished wood for ship building, i.e. (i) the *Brāhmaṇa Jāti*, the wood which was light, soft and could be easily joined to any other kind of wood; (ii) the *Kṣhatriya Jāti*, the wood which was light, hard and could not be joined to other classes; (iii) the *Vaishya Jāti*, the wood which was soft and heavy; and (iv) *Shudra Jāti*, the wood which was hard and heavy. Besides, the wood of mixed-class (*Dvijāti*) consisted of properties of two separate classes.

According to Bhoja a ship constructed with the wood of the *Kṣhatriya* class brought wealth and happiness.[92] It was capable of passing through troubled water or where navigation was difficult. The ships made of two different kinds of wood brought neither good nor comfort. They did not last long, split, and sank in the water.[93] For this reason, same type of wood was used for new construction or repairs.

Bhoja also mentions how a ship could be decorated and furnished. Bhoja has referred to ships with four, three, two and one mast and recommended painting with white, red, yellow and blue respectively.[94] The sail was made of *avājñāsika* cloth painted with white, red, spotted yellow and black colours. According to *Yuktikalpataru* on the prow eight faces such as those of lion, buffalo, serpent, elephant, tiger, birds(duck, peahen or parrot), frog and man were depicted and pictures of sun pitcher, mirror, moon, god Indra, swan, peacock, parrot, lion, elephant, serpent, tiger and two bees were painted on the body of the ship. They were painted after smearing with white, then red, then yellow and lastly blue colour in due proportion and one after another.[95] K. Sridharan[96] says that 'such traditions had been carried down even during Moghul (Mughal) period when the state barges depicted figures of peacock and alligators. Other elements of decoration were pearls and garlands of gold to be attached to and hung from the beautifully shaped prows.' All these shows that the science of ship-building was very meticulously developed in ancient times with a view to make the journey safer and faster. The shipbuilders had a good knowledge of the materials as well as the varieties and properties of wood. The above enumeration must have been taken as the standard pattern followed all over India.

The people of Orissa were highly advanced in the art of ship-building. They prepared well-built ships suitable for sea voyages. A paragraph of the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*[97] distinctly bears testimony to the efficiency of the people of ancient Orissa in the technique of ship building where from it is known that Chilikā was a high class harbour port where thousands of ships took shelter and embarked and disembarked their cargos. This also makes some clear cut reference to the boat building technology of ancient Orissa. The ships built on the coast of Orissa were protected outside with covers of sheets of cast copper. In the ships there were different organs for the smooth sailing, i.e. the *Nāva* gave velocity to motion, the *Matsya* steered the direction, the *Pakṣhī* ascertained the direction of the wind and the *Kurma* indicated the weather. The ships were varied in shape and size as high and long and were called *Unnatā* and *Dīrghā* respectively. Ships for more speed had also their masts and sails. The fore parts of ships looked in shape like lions, tigers, elephants, serpents, swans, peacocks, frogs or human heads. It is evident that the Kaliṅgan ship could cover 200 miles in a day.[98] A.P. Sah[99] has made reference to various kinds of boats namely, *bhelake, vāriratha, nauḥ, tarikaḥ, plavaḥ, tarandhuḥ, vahanaḥ, taraṇdah* and *vāra-vaṭaḥ* which have been mentioned in the lexicon *Trikāṇḍaśesha* of Puruṣhottama. The Pulindas used a kind of boat named Pādāraka.[100] The epigraphic references to the grant of right over landing places on the bank of the river (*ghāṭṭa*) and ferry places (*nadītarasthāna*) to the beneficiaries suggest the use of boats on a considerable scale.[101] It is significant to mention that the bone implements, harpoons and polished stone adzes which have been discovered from Golbāi in the Khurdhā district of Orissa indicate a culture where people possibly lived mainly on fishing, and probably building boats.[102] The discovery of a sizeable number of adzes for wood working gives the positive indication that Golbāi was a boat building centre in ancient times. Golbāi in fact is the only excavated site in Orissa so far wherefrom the indication of boat building has been revealed.

The sculptures of Orissa depict boats of various types. A sculptured frieze collected from the vicinity of Brahmeśvara temple, now preserved in the Orissa State Museum depicts boats/ships carrying elephants. The frieze depicts two ships; one is fully represented and in the second one only frontal part is shown (Fig. 21). In the first ship it is noticed that there is a standing elephant in the front part while the second one which is partially shown also depicts a standing elephant on its frontal portion. From this representation it may be inferred that probably the sculptural panel depicts the transportation of elephants from Orissa by ship to other countries. The sculptures justify at least two points that the ships of

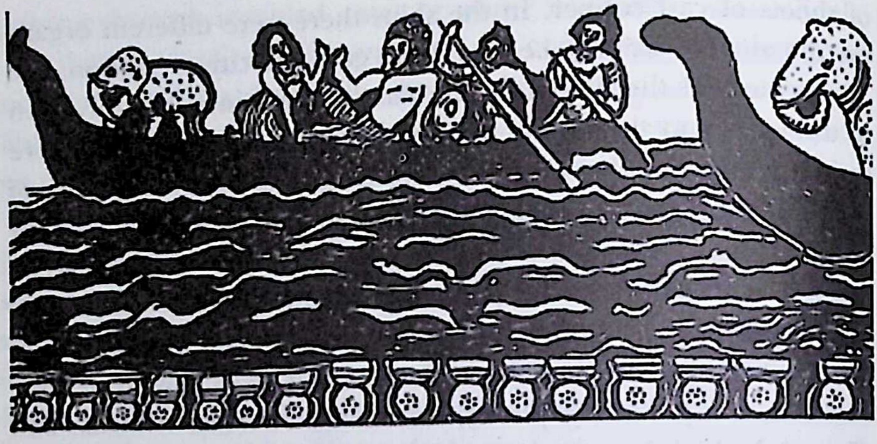


Fig. 21: Shipment of Elephants from Orissan coast.

ancient Orissa were well built, spacious and were strong enough to carry even elephants, and that elephant was an item of export among many other items. Another slab containing an eight armed image of *Mahiṣāsura-mardinī Durgā*, collected from the same Brahmeśvara temple complex has the representation of a boat below the pedestal of the Devī (Goddess). The goddess is supposed to have engaged in a fierce sea-battle with the ferocious demon *Mahiṣāsura*. The scene undoubtedly represents a naval fight which is a unique representation in the Hindu art. Another sculpture, supposed to have been collected from the Sun temple, Koṇārak and now preserved in the Indian Museum, Kolkatā depicts a boat being rowed by four persons with a royal personage inside the boat. As the boat depicted in this sculpture has a cabin in the middle it can be called *Madhyamandirā* type of boat as per the description of the *Yuktikalpataru*. On the parapet of the *Jagamohana* of the Sun temple at Koṇārak the *Mārtaṇḍa-Bhairabhas* are shown as dancing on boats. On the *Bhogamaṇḍapa* of the Jagannāth temple at Puri there is a magnificent representation of a boat in chlorite stone (Fig. 22). R.L. Mitra,[103] however, says that it was 'evidently intended for a river'. Another magnificent representation of a boat can be noticed in the Liṅgarāj temple at Bhubaneśwar. The scene represents a woman steering a boat with an oar which is a unique specimen in the history of the Indian art tradition. The Vaitāl temple of Bhubaneśwar seems

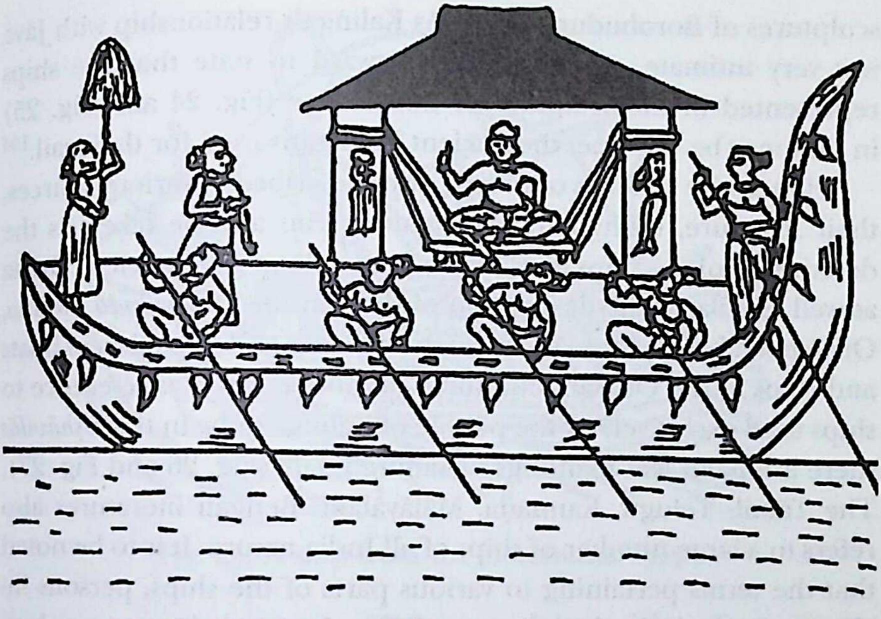


Fig. 22: The king & his attendants preparing for rowing festival, Jagannāth temple, Puri.

like an over turned boat (Fig. 23). However, the boats and ships depicted in the sculptural art of India, though provide us with some indirect idea about the nature and size, it does not throw light on their kinds, construction techniques etc. But it is certain and without doubt that the idea and design of the these depicted boats and ships must have come to the mind of the sculptors and artists, not out of complete imagination, but from the memory of the scenes of a ship of that make which they must have witnessed in the locality during their life time. Outside India, ships of Indian types were also depicted on the

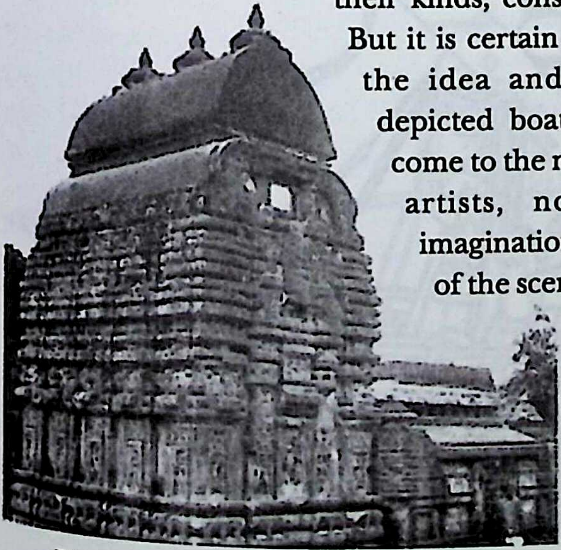


Fig. 23: Vaitāl Temple, Bhubaneswar.

sculptures of Borobudur in Jāvā. As Kaliṅga's relationship with Jāvā was very intimate, scholars come forward to state that the ships represented in the sculpture of Borobudur (Fig. 24 and Fig. 25) in Jāvā may be the type, the ancient Kaliṅgāns used for their sail.[104]

Hence, the varieties of Indian ships described in various sources, their structure, utility and management can also be taken as the description of the ships used by the regional sailors of ancient Orissa as well. Similarly, the description of ships in the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, Oriyā palm leaves, Oriyā writings, the carvings and depiction of boats and ships in the Orissan sculptures cannot be taken as reference to ships used exclusively by the people of Kaliṅga only. In the *Uṣhāvilās* there are palm leaf paintings of sailing boats (Fig. 26 and Fig. 27). The Tāmil, Telugu, Kannaḍa, Mālāyālam, Beṅgali literatures also refers to a large number of ships of all India nature. It is to be noted that the terms pertaining to various parts of the ships, persons in-charge and their duties may differ from region to region, depending upon the language of the locality. It can also be a fact

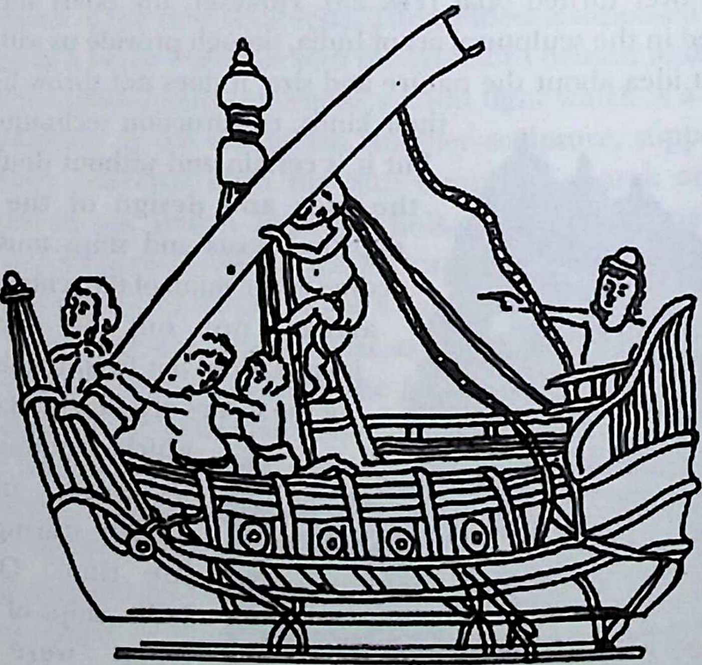


Fig. 24: A ship of Borobudur.

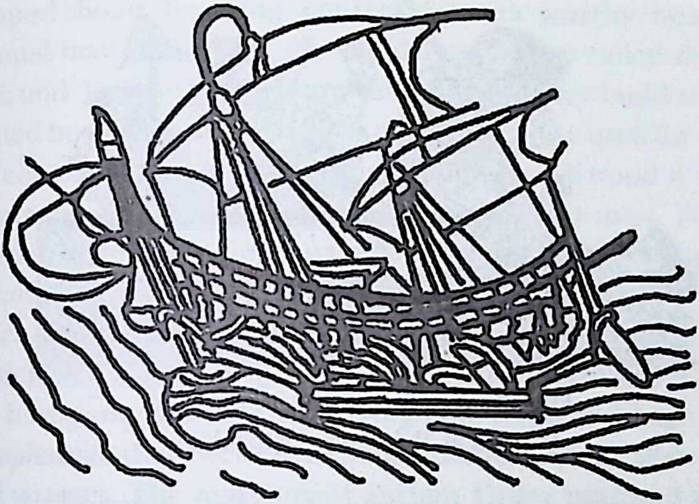


Fig. 25: A ship from the Borobudur Stūpa.

that some particular types of ship were the specialty of a particular region depending upon the availability of wood, the suitability of the ships for their ports and for their typical merchandise. As for example we have specific reference that the Kaliṅgān ships carried elephants which must have required a special type of construction.

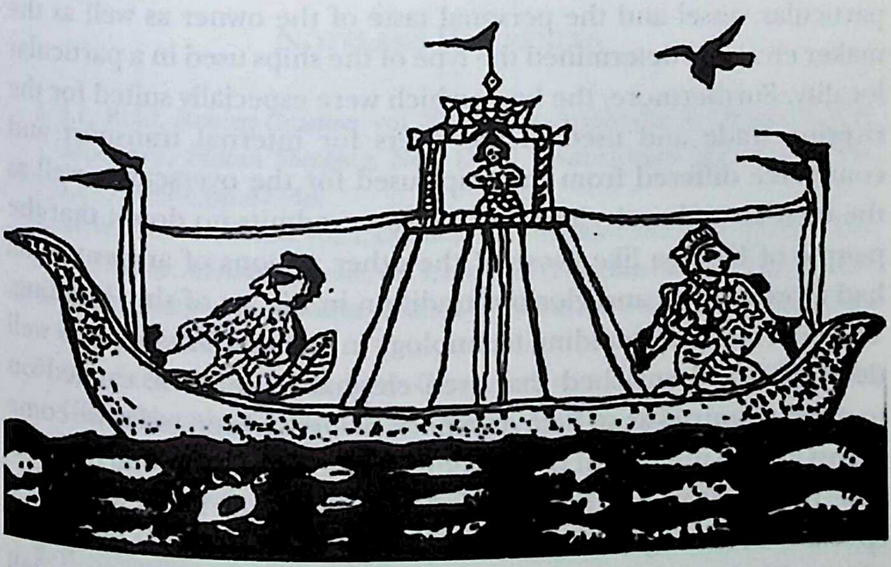


Fig. 26: A sailing boat in the sea (Palmleaf painting, Uṣhāvilās).

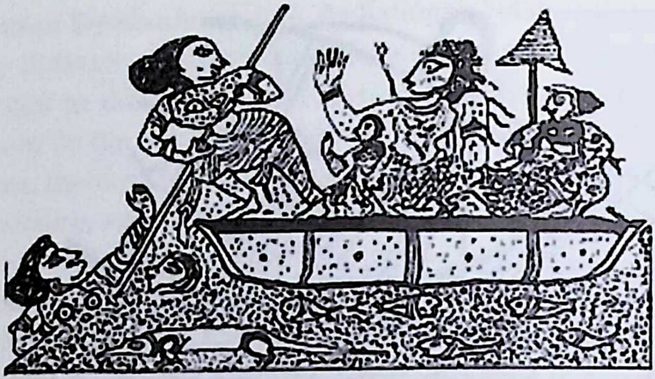


Fig. 27: A sailing boat in the sea
(Palmleaf Painting, Ushāvilās).

The ships stationed in the *Droṇimukha* or *Doṇamuha* were distinguished from the ships of *Paṭṭnā.* The ships that exclusively halted at *Paṭṭnās* could not sometimes penetrate into the *Droṇimukha* ports which were situated near the confluence of the river and sea. Many other factors like the availability of raw materials for construction of ships, the financial strength of the ship owners, the royal patronage, the efficiency and the technical skill of the builders of the ships, the demand for the suitability of voyage of a particular vessel and the personal taste of the owner as well as the maker etc. have determined the type of the ships used in a particular locality. Furthermore, the boats which were especially suited for the riverine trade and used in the rivers for internal transport and commerce differed from the ships used for the overseas as well as the inter-coastal trade. The fact, however, admits no doubt that the people of Kaliṅga like those of the other regions of ancient India had a prospective and glorious tradition in the art of ship-building. The boat and ship building technology in ancient Orissa was so well developed and enriched that even elephants could be carried on to other countries as an item of export. In Orissa, even today we come across a large number of boat building centres in the coastal districts. The Bālaśore coast is famous for building clinker boats which is a specialty of the region, not built anywhere else in the East coast. The places like Patharā, Naīri, etc. on the Chilikā coast have well developed boat- building centres for sea worthy boats. The traditional boat builders of the Chilikā region are called *Bindhāṇīs, Baḍhāis* and *Viśwakarmās* (all are carpenters). They build small flat-bottomed boats known as *naukā* or *ḍaṅgā* which are used for crossing rivers, coastal transport and fishing. Preferably *Śāl* wood is used for construction of *naukā* while bamboos are used as mast. Here, the knowledge of boat building has come down as a family tradition. The ships and boats of ancient days were built by sewing the planks together and using various kinds of timber such as teak, sal, mango etc. which were available in the locality. While some were sea worthy vessels having the capacity of carrying bulk cargo and huge animals like elephants others were riverine boats and ships suitable only for coastal voyages. The mariners of ancient Orissa practised caulking to stop the water leakage in the craft by using coir, cotton, wax etc. Thus, Kaliṅga in ancient times having with the existence of a good number of ports and flourishing overseas trade, was bound to have well developed ship-building technology as the ships were a prerequisite for the overseas trade and maritime activities.

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Ethical Crisis in Medical Sciences: A Philosophical Analysis of the Ethics of Healthcare Technologies*

Introduction

Ideally health care technologies ought to aim at the increase of public good and welfare and hence should make a better quality of life as their primary objective. But it is doubtful whether the rapid developments in technological innovations during the last few decades have consistently aided human welfare and public good. Apart from the changes in the ways health care professionals consider their occupation, corporate interests of the pharmaceutical firms and the major producers of health care technologies play crucial roles in determining the nature of professional etiquette and approaches to human welfare in the health care sector. The market demand need not necessarily reflect the genuine needs of the consumers. This scenario has induced a very deep ethical crisis.

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This paper argues that the root cause of this ethical crisis is civilizational in nature—the way the science of medicine conceives its ultimate object, the human self, in the Western civilization. There is a fundamental confusion with regard to the nature of the human self and this confusion has persisted in almost all human endeavours that had defined the very dynamism and momentum of the Western civilization. This paper will particularly focus the ways in which the science of medicine conceives and approaches the human self with the explicit objective of providing care. The root of such a confusion can be found in some of its elementary assumptions about human nature and the essence of man's being. With an analysis of some such assumptions, this paper tries to enquire why the technological and scientific innovations in the health care sector give rise to several serious ethical problems and challenges while their primary objective is to aid human welfare. The issues under focus include questions concerning the quality and value of human life, the factors that make life worth living, and the relevance of the socio-cultural and emotional aspects in deciding the nature of care. The innovations in the healthcare sector help us maintain certain standards of bodily and mental health. But like any other form of knowledge, this can also be abused and the deeper ethical issue is; how we ought to use technologies? This is to enquire how we ought to behave. It can be argued that fear of death or death anxiety is a major motivator of human behaviour. But a shift of focus from "life's quality" to a mere "countering of physical death" may prove counterproductive and may induce a fundamental ethical crisis in the very practice of health care professions. I argue that, owing to its mechanistic conception of human self—where it is understood predominantly with the help of a machine metaphor, the body-machine—the scientific and technological advancements tend to be reduced to mere counter-death strategies.

This paper will further argue that, the fundamental confusion that causes such a crisis is the result of the insoluble ambiguities pertaining to our understanding of the nature of human self, to which care is or is not provided. Like a physicist or a chemist, or an engineer, the medical professionals too deal with scientific problems and come up with explanations, based on knowledge about facts and universal laws of nature. Yet they encounter entirely different ethical issues, as they deal with the lives of men. As Alexis Carrel says, there is a strange disparity between the sciences of inert matter and those of life.[1] In a common ethical dilemma, the decision making process is a rational enterprise and we can employ the standard procedure and rationalize our decisions. After examining the various options and arguments in order to get a clear view of the issue, the stakeholders—all of the individuals whose interests might be affected by the decision—are identified. All possible courses of action need to be listed out and after making a review of all arguments a rational choice is made from the available options that have the strongest set of moral reasons behind it. Ethical principles governing notions such as fairness, justice, equality, duty, obligation, responsibility and various kinds of rights are conflated with other nonmoral reasons for action based on prudence or self-interest, efficiency, and economy[2]. But this standard procedure fails in health care sector, as it is not a simple moral vs. non-moral reasons issue.

The absence of a clear and balanced concept of human self to which care is provided often leads to some problems. For instance, on certain occasions a mere extending of life with the help of healthcare technologies and medicines may come into conflict with our conceptions about human life and the importance we attach to a qualitatively higher and worth living life. The conflict is between a healthy and meaningful living vs. a mere sustenance of physical life. These inherent philosophical confusions lead to another divide; between what Michael A. Santro terms the divide between genuine medical needs and the market demand. Corporate interests of the pharmaceutical and other major producers of health care technologies tend to neglect the former. For instance, as per the UNAIDS estimates, out of the 33.2 million people who live with HIV in the world, 22.5 million are from the Sub-Saharan Africa and the entire Europe, Central Asia and North America put together have only 3.7 million people who live with AIDS.[3] But the amount pharmaceutical firms invest for research in the development of new drugs for HIV is proportionally less. Consequently, while a year's worth of Lovastatin, a drug that decreases blood cholesterol, costs less that $1,000, powerful AIDS medications can cost more than $12,000 per year, which is beyond an average African's ability to afford.[4] This exposes the contrast between genuine medical needs and the market demand.

According to Santro, it is the interjection of profit motivation into drug research that creates the greatest ethical challenges, which are endemic to the free market system. The problem with the market, according to him is that, it does not perfectly correspond to human medical needs. The industrialization of health sector, the inhibition of Governments in interfering the market, and the absence of a more balanced conception of social welfare further worsen the scenario. Santro adds:

> The market responds to consumer demand, which reflects wealth and ability to pay Human medical needs, however, exist even where consumer markets don't. Conversely ... the pharmaceutical industry sometimes attempts to create consumer markets for drugs that do not optimally serve medical needs.[5]

We will now primarily focus on the philosophical confusion that is the root cause of many ethical issues in health care sector and will examine how this has led to conceiving health care technologies as counter-death technologies. As mentioned above, I argue that the modern medical sciences' conception of the human self is inherently problematic. Historically, this conception of human self has evolved from the enlightenment ideas about the factual world that can be understood in purely mechanical terms. The mind-body divide—which was central to modernity's conception of man—was actually a division of the human self and it had led to different ways of understanding the nature of man. While the sciences reduced their understanding to the physical properties, religion highlighted the spiritual aspects and often considered the physical counterpart as the result of sin. With certain post-enlightenment developments this body negativism was overcome and more focused enquiries on the human body were taken of. Contrary to consciousness, the body has been viewed as a machine and the machine metaphor dominated the science and its practices.

This machine metaphor, though leads to better understanding and treatment of the human body, fails to conceive the human self as a unitary whole. It reduces the self to the body and its mechanical properties. This leads to conceiving the healthcare technologies as mere counter-death technologies, as its ultimate purpose becomes the survival of the body by means of countering death. As mentioned above, this is the consequence of the conception of self based on the machine metaphor. Contrary to this we find that many ancient systems of knowledge and philosophies, both in the West as well as in India and other civilizations offer a different conception of and approach to the human self. These philosophies of the body and the human self not only did not exhibit the body negativism of the pre-enlightenment European conceptions, but also project a picture of the body where it was treated with material, emotional and spiritual care. They place the self in a wide context of nature (scientific), society (ethics and other values), tradition (history) and material, psychological and spiritual life. The ancient Greek conception of man and the insights present in the *Ayurveda* and *Yoga* in India are some examples.

Science of Medicine and the Concept of Human Self

New technologies enable us to do several things we could not even imagine earlier. For instance, with plastic surgery, we can now make our looks changed significantly and the moral implication is that; our body is not something which is "given" to us—as a result of *karmas* performed in past lives or by virtue of God being its creator.[6] Here many of our traditional ethical and moral assumptions are challenged by the possibilities of the modern technological contexts. A more obvious example is where the physician wonders what criterion he/she needs to use in order to determine whether patients with terminal illness be placed on respirators or not? The ethical issues are; whether, when and how to use particular technologies? The employment of these technologies and administering of medicines indefinitely often cost the patient dearly with no certainty about its benefits. In several such situations the quality of life cannot be assured, though those technologies may help sustaining it. The stakeholders include, the patient him/herself, the physician, the patient's relatives, the Government etc. Such problems are ethically perplexing to practitioners world-wide, irrespective of the cultural differences. Every usage of technology involves some risk and as Morton Winston points out, each new technology raises the implicit ethical question which asks, should we employ this new technique/technology?[7] We use these technologies to provide care, but with no clear understanding of what care is and to what it is provided.

We need to have a clear picture about the concept of human self before we attempt to understand the issues of value of life, nature, worth and desirability of care. The normal way—and the historical too—is to understand man as a union of both body and mind. There are different scientific and psychological theories which tried to reduce one to the other, either partially or completely. The WHO understanding of health attempts to overcome this dichotomy as the preamble to its Constitution defines it as a "... state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity"[8] As Daniel Callahan states, it is a definition that implies that there is some intrinsic relationship between the good of the body and the good of the self and hence the dualism is irrelevant. For Callahan this definition sounds profoundly frustrating as it is enticingly attractive. He adds that it seems simply impossible to device a concept of health which is rich enough to be nutritious and yet not so rich as to be indigestible.[9] But this idea of "complete well-being" attracts immediate criticism as it seems to be demanding too much, as Callahan himself points out, it is attainable only if people ceased expecting much from life.[10] The science of medicine too finds it difficult to comprehend all the implications of the idea of "complete wellbeing". This idea often sounds religious and mystical. Medical sciences usually do not go beyond this dualism and the WHO ideal can be attained only by reducing one to the other. The wide practice is to look for mechanistic explanations and solutions to the problem, thanks to the insufficient knowledge we have about ourselves.

Ideally "health care" refers to the good of both the body and the mind, which is reflected in the above mentioned WHO preamble. The question of health problematizes a number of other related issues including the problem of man's relationship with the environment, the question of developing balanced social and political organizations etc. The ancient Indian science of medicine *Ayurveda* conceives health as a state where the *tridosas* or the three humorals in the human body are in a perfect equilibrium. This equilibrium at the micro level reflects the equilibrium of the three *gunas—satva, rajas* and *tamas*, out of which the entire nature is constituted—of nature. The concept of health is thus related to harmony, both at the micro and the macro levels. This conception of body is drastically different from the way modern medical sciences understand body. The immediate object of the science of medicine has been the body. The question "what is body" is a scientific question (and also what is mind?) and can be tackled scientifically.

The ancient Greek conception of the self too reflects a similar unity. The fine distinctions which the concept of the human self or subject acquired were not present even in the philosophy of Aristotle, whose logical treatment of the subject conceived it as "of which something that might be predicated. For the Greeks, man was a "being with logos" which could mean a being with language or reason. But for the spiritual teachings of Scholastic thought it was necessary to separate the body from the soul and relegate the former to a lower category of being. This body negativism was further propelled by an ignorance about the body, the domain of which was not freely allowed to be explored by the Catholic church and its metaphysical and theological assumptions.

As pointed out by Alexie Carrel, those who investigate the phenomena of life are in the midst of a magic forest, whose countless trees unceasingly change their place and their shape. They are crushed under a mass of facts, which they can describe but are incapable of defining in algebraic equations. He adds that our conceptions of him are imbued with metaphysics. They are founded on so many and such imprecise data that the temptation is great to choose among them those which please us. Therefore, our idea of man varies according to our feelings and beliefs. A materialist and a spiritualist accept the same definition of a crystal of sodium chloride. But they do not agree with one another upon that of the human being.[11]

Concurrent to the science of the body, there always had been a strong sociology and politics of the body, which had precedence over the science. As Anthony Synnott says, at any given time there are likely to be many paradigms of the body: competing, complementary, or contradictory.[12] With more and more advances we made in the science of medicine, we have understood the body and its operations better. This is particularly a post-renaissance phenomenon and the medical sciences helped to get rid of the "body negativism" that prevailed in the early days of Greeko-Roman and Christian civilization. The latter predominantly conceived the body as inferior to the soul and in Christianity the body had been viewed as the product of sin.[13] On the other side, the idea that body is a machine gained prominence.

The machine metaphor began to predominate in our understanding of man. In the philosophy of Rene Descartes (1596–1650), who is considered as the father of modern philosophy, the mind was fundamentally separated from the body. He conceived that the two domains followed two different set of rules, where the body essentially functioned based on mechanical principles.[14] French thinker Michel Foucault (1926–1984) calls this the "Cartesian moment" in the history of thought. Foucault observes that, historically the subject's relationship and access to truth were viewed in two different ways. The first one he calls as "the care of the self" where knowledge is related with the self-transformation. The second one emphasizes "knowing oneself", which emphasizes detached observation of the world by the subject. These two enterprises named respectively as spirituality and philosophy, have dominated the cultural history of the West at different periods and determined the subject's relationship and access to truth during these periods and consequently the nature of ethical frameworks and conceptions of self. Unlike spirituality where care of the self is the dominant approach, philosophy is concerned with methodological issues that are related with the question; "what it is that enables the subject to have access to truth?" It also attempts to determine the conditions and limits of the subject's access to truth. The "Cartesian moment" proposed a different conception of man. According to Foucault, it fundamentally functioned in two ways; philosophically requalifying the know yourself and discrediting the care of the self. With this the modern age of the history of truth begins and here knowledge itself and knowledge alone gives access to truth[15]. By rearticulating the mind-body dichotomy, the Cartesian moment had confined the attention of the scientific pursuits to the domain of the physical world—to the body by the science of medicine—and with this the machine metaphor too has become dominant

The Domination of the Machine Metaphor

Descartes in his *Discourse on Method and Meditations* asserts that he considers him "... firstly, as having a face, hands, arms, and the whole machine made up of flesh and bones, such as it appears in a corpse and which I designated by the name of body.[16] The human mind thus becomes the center of the knowledge acquisition process and this has been fundamentally separated from the body which is a machine. Descartes also considered it as a "substance", which though independent from the mind, is dependent on God, which alone is considered as pure substance. In one sense both the mind and the body were relegated to a lower realm. Nevertheless, they both are of equal status as they are regulated by different set of laws. This conception raises the body to a higher level, which paved way to the overcoming of the body-negativism that was prevalent over several centuries in the Western civilization. Significantly, the works of Darwin on human evolution (with more emphasis on the evolution of the body) had reversed the ancient dichotomies of mind-body, human-animal, superior-inferior, asserted from Plato to Descartes.[17]

In philosophy, the German philosopher Nietzsche's radical criticism of morality, which was also a criticism of the traditional conceptions of the human subject, called for a paradigm shift in the very image of the human self in the West. He identified the "will to power" as the central driving force of the human subject and this force is a bodily-animal force which comes from a machine called the body.[18]

All these have prepared a conceptual environment where the science of medicine could pursue a focused enquiry into the body with a conception of it as a machine. Medical science pioneered this paradigm shift in the post-enlightenment era and unraveled hitherto unknown domains of the body by gathering more and more knowledge about its structure and function. Several developments like the invention of stethoscope in1816 by Rene Laennec (1781–1826), the first successful transfusion of human blood by British obstetrician James Blundell (1791–1878) in 1818, the germ theory of disease by Louis Pasteur (1822–1895) and Robert Koch (1843–1910) during the 1870s and the development of several vaccines including for rabies, anthrax, cholera, plague and many other deadly diseases, the discovery of X rays by the German physicist Wilhelm Conrad Roentgen (1845–1923) in 1895, the development of aspirin by Felix Hoffman (1868–1946) in 1899 etc., have made the human body less mysterious and its management and control much easier. Synnott observes that, the 'cell' theory of Rudolf Virchow, and the 'germ' theory of Louis Pasteur transformed medicine from an art into a science."[19] With this transformation the "body negativism" that prevailed over the conceptions of man in the western world was also overcome.

The machine metaphor desacrosanctized the body and secularized it.[20] Care to the body thus comes to be viewed differently. This secularization implies that, what one's body is and what one does with it are matters that have nothing to do with any superhuman metaphysical agency like God. Body is a machine composed of biochemical substances and can go wrong like any other machine. It can be repaired, and significantly modified. Its maintenance is comparable to the maintenance of a machine. As Simon J Williams observes, some 600,000 operations are performed annually in the U.S. to make people look younger or more beautiful, with women making up the vast majority and a growing male market.[21] Effective repairing depends on efficient spare parts like cardiac pacemakers, valves, titanium hips, polymer blood vessels, electronic eye and ear implants, collagen fiber and silicon rubber skins, and with technology improves, one may even implant electronic chips.[22] The constant supply of these spare parts needs to be ensured and this makes the industrialization of the healthcare sector a necessity in modern life. As observed by Synnott, the body thus increasingly becomes bionic. As machines are cannibalized for spare parts, humans and animals are also being cannibalized for the transplantation of parts like hearts, livers, pancreas, kidneys, corneas, and bone marrows.[23]

Following Synnot, we may observe that, the new scenario is introducing a new set of vocabularies. Hospitals may be viewed as garages, healthcare equipment as tools, transplantation as cannibalization, treatment as repair, care as maintenance, and death as a phenomenon that leads to a situation where we condemn the machine. The concepts of care and welfare will be viewed as part of maintaining the body, which is a machine, a machine with an emotional environment. But this scenario may have undesirable consequences in the healthcare sector. As Simon J. Williams points out, whilst current developments in medical technology offer us unprecedented control over our bodies, they also lead to a growing crisis of identity concerning what precisely the body *is* and what it might *become*.[24] It further leads to alienation of the person who is ill, from him/herself—the self in its totality. Humans and their health problems are separated from the physical, psychological, social, political, cultural and environmental contexts. Health care technologies in this context degenerate into counter-death technologies, as humans are no longer treated as individuals with necessary cultural, emotional and psychological environment but only as machines.

The concept of care is intrinsically related with social values. It also implicates an idea of well-being, which further suggests the wellbeing of the human self in its totality. The machine metaphor is inadequate to do justice to this idea of care. It reduces care to maintenance, which projects a standardized ideal and evaluates all situations in the light of this ideal. The corporate interests of the healthcare industries are the major beneficiaries of this machine metaphor. It gives them an easy model to work with; to set ideals and standards and device procedures. A machine definitely has certain advantages over humans. Since they are unaffected by the cultural and social realities they can easily be upgraded to certain desirable levels of efficiency. Cannibalization is much easier and economical. These are the standards to which the machine metaphor tries to upgrade the human being. Ultimately, it projects a conception of human self which can attain certain high levels of perfection on certain levels of functioning.

But it achieves these levels of perfection at the expense of making many vital factors concerning human life irrelevant. The standardization of human self leads to self-alienation, as it fails to do justice to the fact that each human being is unique. The human self is not a machine, as the French philosopher and writer Jean Paul Sartre (1905–1980) argues, there is an essential difference between things that exist in themselves (*en-soi*) and human beings who exist for themselves (*pour-soi*). There is something called the "existential dread" that characterizes the being of man and it is impossible to have a "standard" for man in the sense we can have a standard for cars and computers. Sartre shows that, while men have the freedom to design his/her life, other animals are deprived of it and man is nothing else but that which he makes of himself. He has the ability to choose for himself and project certain possibilities for him to the future. Man is more than a machine. Sartre asserts that, man is that kind of being "... whose existence comes before its essence, a being which exists before it can be defined by any conception of it. That being is man or, as Heidegger has it, the human reality."[25] The first principle for Sartre is that man is nothing else but that which he makes of himself.[26] What makes man characteristically different from machines is his ability to choose for himself and project certain possibilities for him to the future. Man's being cannot appear without being haunted by value and projected toward its own possibles.[29]

With the domination of the machine metaphor, healthcare increasingly gets equated with "countering death". The products of healthcare technologies are no doubt extremely valuable for meaningful human life. But the usage of these technologies needed to be guided not by a philosophy of life and ethics that subscribe to the machine metaphor. These technologies need to be related with a consistent and meaningful conception of human welfare. As such these technologies are not essentially counter-death technologies, but they are used so as this usage is always guided by the culturally prevailing philosophies of life. The machine metaphor is deeply rooted in our cultural psyche. While the only concern becomes the maintenance of the machine, without any interest in its meaningfulness and purpose, the technologies adopted for this goal become alienated from their original objectives. The ordinary practice is to condemn a machine when its maintenance becomes too expensive. But humans are not ordinary machines, but are special machines with an emotional, social and cultural environment. They have a different kind of value, which computers and cell phones don't have.

But their bodies still function like machines and hence the dichotomy between self and the body reemerges. This demands different conceptions of human self, death and care. The self needed to be placed in the socio-cultural and emotional environment. To come out of this is the real task for the practice of health care professions.

Being, Death and the relevance of Care: Beyond the machine metaphor

Death is not just a physical phenomenon. In a Heideggerian language, death makes the being of man (Dasein) a "no-longer-being-there".[28] Even after a person dies, his/her corpse remains not just a lifeless object for others. We relate the corpse with the dead person and still continue to relate ourselves to him/her. Death does not take away the person who dies from the world, as the world "created" by him/her continues to exist. The being of man, as different from the being of other entities and animals, is situated in history, in a socio-cultural and emotional environment. The idea of care is related with this environment and the way we understand death is also linked with it.

Various religious traditions and societies have subscribed to peculiar conceptions of the human self, its being and death. The machine metaphor is a derivative of the scientific world view and it became the overriding metaphor with the domination of scientific rationality and with the scientific conception of knowledge becoming the paradigmatic during the post-enlightenment Europe. This has led to equating care with maintaining the body according to certain standards. But care is a wider term with a broader conceptual environment. Modern ethical frameworks like utilitarianism and libertarianism link the notion of care with happiness or rights and try to rationalize it. But often this concept cannot be rationalized, as it is deeply rooted in specific cultural contexts.

Most of the religions consider care as a vital spiritual virtue. Buddhism for instance conceived "suffering" as a universal experience and explored ways to overcome it. The principle of *dharma* (righteousness) had been proposed both by the Buddha and by the *Upanishadic* tradition much older than the former, in order to emphasize the fact that the ultimate philosophical quest was to overcome human agony. Buddhism interestingly refers to death and old age as the greatest miseries of life and explores the ways to overcome the miseries. Thus the ultimate cause of suffering has been located in *avidya* or ignorance about the real nature of the self and conceived its removal as the final cure. Vagbhata, one of ancient India's prominent exponents of *Ayurveda* and author of many seminal texts like the *Astangahridaya* and *Astangasamgraha*, calls Lord Buddha the *apurvavaidya*, or the rarest physician, referring to the fact that only spiritual knowledge taught by the Buddha can bring ultimate cure to miseries. It also implies that merely treating the body does not ensure comfort. The being of man, as conceived by Buddha is a being who suffers. From this perspective, all human endeavours, scientific, technological, spiritual and philosophical ought to aim at the cessation of human suffering. Knowledge and technological know how gain significance only to the extend they contribute to this. The concept of welfare corresponding to this notion of being touches upon all the possible aspects of the being of man. The *Mandukya Upanisad* analyses man's being from four levels and thus extends the conception far above the physical body.. First, the being constituted of the gross body (*Stula sarira*), which is conditioned by the physical body, sense organs, the mind, intellect, the internal organ that comprehends, ego and vital airs or life-energy. Second, there is the subtle body (*Suksma sarira*), conditioned by all the above mentioned except body and sense organs. At the third level, all conditions except vital airs vanish and here the body remains at its causal form (*karana sarira*). At the final stage, all conditions cease to exist, and here the being exists as pure consciousness, unaffected by anything in the external world.

The concept of welfare corresponding to this notion of being touches upon all the aspects of the being mentioned above. Hence the science of medicine in India, which is known as *Ayurveda*, is a science which aims at the welfare of the body and the mind and also makes room for spiritual emancipation. Further knowledge traditions like the Yoga, had been for centuries contemplating on the nature of human self and exploring the ways by which welfare can be achieved. The approach of many of these knowledge traditions, both Indian and others, is more comprehensive and they are committed to a framework of values.

The body in Ayurveda is composed of basic material substances or the *panchabhutas;* earth, water, fire, air and ether. Again, like the outer nature, the human body too is constituted of the three gunas; *satva, rajas* and *tamas*. The proportion of their composition determines the nature of the body. There is a *tridosa* doctrine which explicates the normal state of the human body. The three *dosas* of *vata, pitta* and *kapha* need to maintain equilibrium in order to maintain health and whenever this equilibrium is lost, the body needs treatment in order to regain it. This state of equilibrium explains the state of immunity. The body or *sarira* is defined as *siryate iti sarira,* which means "that which decays is the body.

Health care thus cannot be equated with countering death, as the body is not a mere machine. The being of man, as conceived by Buddha is a being who suffers. From this perspective, all human endeavours, scientific, technological, spiritual and philosophical ought to aim at the cessation of human suffering. Knowledge and technological know-how gain significance only to the extend they contribute to this. As long as healthcare technologies are employed as counter-death technologies, the actual meaning of technology—its employment in the society for promoting welfare—remains unrealizable.

To go beyond the body metaphor is to stop identifying the human self with the body or even to the body-mind unity, but to keep in the background a conception of self that enables us to understand the meaning of care. All attempts to define man in terms of any one single principle fails to do justice to the integrity of the human self. They fail to conceive the self in its physical, social, cultural, spiritual and psychical entirety.

In a broad sense technology consists of the entire social organization of knowledge, people and things to accomplish specific practical goals that promote welfare.[29] Health care systems and technologies ought to promote this welfare of the human self, where we understand the latter coming out of the age-old dichotomies that have created endless confusions in our ethical assessments. This will not only liberate us from the body-soul dichotomy, but also helps us overcome the alienation of the human self from its social, cultural and emotional environment. The science of medicine thus has to liberate itself from the machine metaphor and thereby cease to confining itself to one single framework of understanding. Care is not a scientific ideal, but is a concept associated with social, cultural and spiritual values. To make the ideal of care materialize, the science needs to integrate with the social and cultural values that determine the nature of the human self.

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The Intercultural Journey of Contemporary Indian Christianity

This essay purports to narrate, in two parts, some aspects of the intercultural journey of Christianity in India. Part One charts the itinerary of contemporary Indian Christianity from the mission of Inculturation to the vision of Interculturality. Part Two spells out the intercultural contribution of Raimon Panikkar, who is, surely, one of the finest fruits of the Hindu-Christian fecundation process of our times.[1]

PART ONE

INDIAN CHRISTIANITY AND INTERCULTURALITY

1. Christian Presence and Indian Assessment

One of the ways of discerning the identity of a person or an organization is by examining the image that one projects in the context in which the person or it lives. This is what we like to do, as we try to trace the journey of Indian Christianity.

A Minority Presence

To begin with, Christianity in India must situate her presence and identity in the context of 97% of the Indian population seeking their salvation outside it. Though Christianity has existed in India from

Apostolic times, the Christian population in India is estimated to be only 20 million placed amidst 900 million people.

Though a minority presence, the 3% Christian population indeed exhibits a great diversity. There are Christians belonging to the Orthodox, Protestant and Catholic Churches with their innumerable sub-divisions and denominations, some of which, of course, exhibit fundamentalism on the one hand, and liberalism on the other. We could also see a great diversity among the Christians in terms of their profession, culture, ethnicity, theology, ritual, and so on. In this context, the important question is: how does a Christian come across to the people of this country? What is the image that a Christian projects in his/her surroundings?

An Institutional Identity

It may not be an overstatement that Christianity in India has exhibited more of an institutional identity than a religious or cultural identity. More often than not, Christians are considered to be outsiders, having an allegiance to a foreign institution. Significantly, this perception is also shared by the Christians themselves. The social and cultural values they seem to embody, the liturgy and worship they partake in, their symbols—all seem to be far removed from the local or home reality. Even Christian religious and priestly formation, besides the fact of being mostly inspired by and supported from abroad, is yet to come to terms with the real Indian situation—all the notable efforts of inculturation not withstanding. This is true of Christian theology too. Ecclesial art, architecture and liturgy have still to express the soul of India. In a word, the Christian presence seems to be over-dependent on and an extension of Rome. Arun Shourie's remarks may be recalled here:

> Financially, ideologically or, if you prefer, "spiritually," and organizationally too, the promotion of Indian personnel to higher posts notwithstanding, the Church has remained tied to the Churches elsewhere. The Second Vatican Council for instance, as we have seen, has turned the Church in India inside out. But the

Church in India made almost no contribution to the reformulation and decisions of the Council—the Council was an almost wholly European affair, with some contributions from the U.S. and Latin America.[2]

Denunciation and Conversion Efforts

Another predominant image that Christianity in India has projected to the average Indian is the denunciation theology or missiology with which Christianity has looked upon other religions, especially Hinduism. Prompted by and imbibing within the cultural superiority of the Greeks which regarded all other people as barbarians and the religious superiority felt by the Jews for whom all the others were pagans, Christians, in the past, have considered people of other religions as ignorant and sitting in the shadows of death. Furthermore, these religions were even thought to be as works of the evil. Suffice here to recall the admonition of Benedict XV, who, in his encyclical on Catholic Missions, *Maximum illud*, defined the goal of the Church's missionary activity as "rescuing that mass of souls from the savage tyranny of the devils."[3]

This was by and large the common missionary stand, with of course, some exceptions. Moreover, the rulers, i.e. the colonizers, were greatly supported by the missionaries and also the Christian scholars of the times, in perpetuating the colonial rule. The Church was even looked upon as "the other half of the rulers, the unofficial branch of government."[4] Being or becoming a Christian was considered to be of foremost importance. Being an Indian was only secondary.

Connected to the denunciation efforts were the acts of conversion which had not been exactly welcome among non-Christians. The missionary service or activity has been—and still is—suspect of an underlying 'motivation'—to convert the "heathens," the weak, the vulnerable, the easily "allurable" (the dalits, the tribals, those struck by a natural disaster) to the "real" religion—not of course for an inner transformation, but merely for a numerical gain. This one-point agenda—that of 'converting'—was further vitiated by the outright contempt, ridicule and sarcasm with which Hinduism was treated and sought to be rejected and destroyed.[5]

A Consequence

As we might expect, cultural alienation is an inevitable consequence of the institutional identity of Christianity and of the denunciation and conversion practices. Alienation and estrangement are the natural outcome when the closely related culture and religion are separated. This was particularly so in India when the Western Christianity made its appearance.

> There would have been no problem, neither alienation nor estrangement if Christianity entered into the Indian ethos joining in the search for the Ultimate Reality, instead of coming with ready-made answers, well formulated outside the Indian context. Instead of coming with the Christian experience, Western Christianity came with Christian answers offered to people living in another context. These had no resonance in the Indian hearts and lives of many Indians. For them Christianity is more an institution engaged in good humanitarian activities rather than a God-centered community. Or we can say that Christianity as a religion did not resonate with Indian religiosity.[6]

In short, there is a general assessment that Christianity in India, by and large, has had the image of an outsider and has been an extension of Western culture.

2. From Inculturation to Interculturation

Yet, notable changes are taking place today in the attitude and approach of Christianity to non-Christian religions and cultures. Presently, significant attempts are being made to overcome the lack of rootedness in the soil that characterized the Christian community from the time of the missionary expansion in India.

These attempts indeed bring to light Christianity's interest and interaction with home cultures, toward giving greater respect to other religions; there are even attempts at newly defining the term Christian.[7] Conquering and conversion are no longer the motivational force of Christians. An attitude of learning and even serving seems to be increasingly emerging. The spirit of dialogue is catching up everywhere and Christians certainly have a lot to contribute to this spirit and process. It is here that we shall situate and evaluate Christianity's recent attempts at inculturation.

Inculturation

Inculturation is a process by which Christians draw from their heritage elements which are compatible with their faith, in order to enrich Christian thought.[8] It is an attempt by which one's faith is understood and expressed through the symbols and language of one's own home culture. Furthermore, instead of projecting an image that is heavily institutionalized, inculturation attempts to discern the spiritual dimension of the Church and integrate them with the movements of the Spirit that has been operative in India for centuries. And we already have a model of inculturation in the early Christians:

> Christians are not distinguished from the rest of mankind by their country, speech or customs; the fact is that they nowhere settle in cities of their own, they use no peculiar language, they cultivate no strange mode of life... they conform to the customs of the country in dress, food and ways of living in general... they love all men.[9]

This shows that the Christian identity need neither be opposed to nor be in isolation from one's cultural identity. Indian Christians do have a common cultural root. The baptism of Jesus in the Jordan indeed represents his integration into the Jewish community. So too the baptism of Christians in the Ganges may well symbolize their inculturation and immersion in the Indian cultural and religious traditions.

Furthermore, inculturation stands for the realization by Christians that "the Church is not a timeless idea but a concrete historical reality. This implies that the Church is subject to the vicissitudes of history and that the actual shape the Church assumed in different place and at different times was largely due to the influence of concrete historical situations."[10] Reflecting on this historical dimension of Christianity, more than twenty-five years ago, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India solemnly declared:

> The Church in India must realize her genuine Indian identity and rid herself of the slur of being foreign which clings to her because of leaning too heavily on foreign support and of the style of life adopted by some of the Christian communities. The Church will realize her Indian identity by adjusting herself to conditions prevailing in the country and developing an indigenous theology.[11]

Responding concretely to this proposal, the Church has in fact contributed, to some extent at least, towards the appreciation and promotion of Indian culture, art, music, etc. The recent emergence of Christian ashrams in different parts of the country, modeled on the pattern of Hindu ashrams, the usage of Hindu scriptures in Christian assemblies, prayer programmes, and so on, are instances of integrating Indian culture and art in Christian life and expression. After the second Vatican Council, the Christian liturgy is being conducted in the local language, and many Indian symbols have been accepted as part of catholic faith expression. Thus, Christian liturgy is no longer of the monolithic Roman style that was in the past.[12]

Limits of Inculturation

Though inculturation is indeed a very positive attempt to inculcate in Christians the sense of "Indian Christianness," yet, its limitations are also being increasingly recognized.

A common criticism on inculturation, at least in the Christian circles, is that it lays an overemphasis on a particular aspect of life, namely, liturgy, without taking into account the overall need. Moreover, it is alleged that inculturation is based on brahmanic cultures and mores and that sufficient attention has not been paid to the cultural situation of the *dalits* (the oppressed) and the tribals. In this connection, it is asked if we could ever limit inculturation to a question of merely adapting some Hindu symbols and ways of worship, without seriously and concretely getting involved in the problems and aspirations of the brothers and sisters of our land?[13]

Beyond Inculturation: Interculturation

But a more serious criticism that we ourselves like to advance would be in the form of following questions: Is inculturation a kind of an imperialistic left over? Going beyond adaptation of Hindu symbols and art forms in its liturgy, would Christianity be genuinely ready to accept the home culture and religion as its constitutive dimension and as a means to discover itself in greater depth? Despite all its attempts of adaptation, has Christianity really given up its absolutist stand: "Truth is one and I alone have it?" Or, is it only to promote this stand indirectly with the help of other cultural and religious symbols and forms? Would Christianity recognize its limitation of perspective and be genuinely ready for an interreligious enrichment? Has Christianity totally overcome its "fulfillment theology" of being at the top of a linear evolution?

It is our submission that Christianity in India is *not yet* in a position to be fully absolved from all the above apprehensions and doubts. But fortunately we are also beginning to witness some positive and encouraging signals of the next important step that Christianity is surely and already taking in its search for a new Indian identity: Interculturation—an attitude that would enable one to view oneself in relation to others and others in relation to oneself. This attitude is basically an openness to, and a willingness to learn from, other cultures and religions. It basically stands for the abandonment of absolutism and the realization that one essentially needs the other for growth. To this emerging new phase in the history of Indian Christian Identity, we now turn our attention.

3. An Intercultural Foundation

As we have just hinted, interculturation is based on the conviction that in our pluralistic human situation, no single culture, religion, tradition or person is totally sufficient to face—let alone solve—any of our human predicaments. We need an intercultural enterprise. Interculturation implies, in the words of Raimon Panikkar, one of today's leading scholars in Cross-Cultural Studies, our efforts "towards a healthy pluralism which would allow for the conviviality and coexistence of cultures and civilizations recognizing that no single culture, religion or tradition has the right to claim to represent the universal range of human experience, nor the power to reduce the diversity of humanity to one single form, broad as this may be."[14]

In other words, human creativity is manifold. It may follow many paths and take forms which we cannot bring into any single frame. Consequently, the intercultural attitude aims to assist in viewing and recognizing the various religious traditions as individual dimensions of the respective other. For this, the ultimate model is the dialogical nature of reality itself. As Panikkar points out, Reality is cosmotheandric: cosmo-the-andric (*cosmos-theos-aner:* cosmic-divine-human). There is a distinction between the three dimensions of reality, but there can be no radical separation. All the three belong together. One does not exist without the other.[15]

Furthermore, we submit, it is this unified and holistic vision of reality which would accommodate the insights of different religious traditions in such a manner that each religious tradition is complemented and challenged by the other tradition.

All this of course implies a proper method. It is here we would like to refer to and profit from the rich insights of Panikkar's Cross-Cultural Hermeneutics.

For Panikkar, the dialogue between religious traditions has to be dialogical in nature—which he calls the "Dialogical Dialogue"[16] (dia-*logos:* piercing through the *logos*—thus reaching the mythos). In other words, it means that one has to go through and thus go beyond and behind the rational or dialectical aspect. Arguments and reasoning are the chief ingredients of dialectical dialogue. But *mythos* is the operating principle of dialogical dialogue. Here there will be arguments, but they will not exhaust the entire dialogue enterprise. Dialogical dialogue will allow space also for experience and non-understanding, besides the element of understanding and rationality. Humility and openness will be the natural outcome of this dialogical enterprise. It implies the readiness to be open to the correction and contribution that our neighbour could make in our way of looking at things. The same contribution we can make to our neighbour, the result being a fusion of horizons.[17] Hence, it is all a question of not absolutizing one's insight, without at the same time, diluting it. It ultimately stands for a pluralism which would overcome exclusivism on the one hand, and inclusivism on the other. Without elaborating further, let us now only indicate briefly two dimensions of this dialogical dialogue.

Dialogue with Oneself

Before we try to understand or dialogue with the other person or religious tradition, it is important that we gain insight into our own tradition. Panikkar calls this "the harmony from within." If we gain this insight into our own tradition, we will be able to experience what he calls the *pars pro toto* effect[18] (that is, the part standing for the whole, the concrete standing for the universal. e.g. my parents representing parentage as such).

This implies that each one of us may be aware of the whole reality under one particular aspect, and this does not mean that we see only a part of reality or truth. Through our religious tradition we see the whole truth, but under only one aspect. We *see* all that we *can* see.

The realization of this limitation in our very selves is very essential to opening ourselves up to and to being embraced by others. In this sense, for Panikkar, an interreligious dialogue has to be preceded by an intrareligious dialogue. This dialogue 'within', or internal scrutiny changes not only our opinion about our own tradition (leading to a realization of our limitation) but also makes us realize that we *essentially* need the other (person, tradition, religion, culture, or whatever) even to understand our very selves.

Dialogue with the Other

Once the internal dialogue begins, once we are engaged in a genuine intra-religious scrutiny, we will be ready for what Panikkar calls the imperative method.[19] The real focus of this method is the ability and willingness to learn from the other and get enriched in the process. It means, further, to search together standing within our own tradition.

In Panikkar's view, this mutual learning and enrichment is an open process. In this, we are open and broad minded enough to allow our dialogue partner to discover our own presuppositions and also criticize our convictions, and vice versa. This only implies that at no point in time can we claim absolute self sufficiency in the endeavor of grasping and shaping reality.

4. Implications for a New Indian Christian Identity

Having shown the need to go beyond inculturation to interculturation, and having also discerned a foundation of such an interculturation, we now venture to spell out some of its implications for a new Indian Christian Identity for our times. It is hoped that the emerging new identity will be marked by characteristics which will indeed underscore a shift in emphasis from: Mission to Dialogue, Christology to Christophany and Option to Cosmic Confidence.

From Mission to Dialogue

One obvious implication of interculturation for a new Indian Christian Identity is that the traditional Christian sense of "Mission" will be seen more in terms of "Dialogue." The basis of such a shift, as we have already indicated, is the realization that no one is self-sufficient and that we need the other to discover ourselves in greater depth. It means, further, that absolutism will be abandoned and intercultural dialogue fostered. It is expected that this will indeed result in a better appreciation, tolerance and respect for other religions, which will in turn promote a mutual understanding and an enrichment to a joint-action for the wholeness of reality.

In this intercultural atmosphere, the future of Christian mission, then, will not consist merely in providing hospitality and assistance, but in a humility and willingness to receive the contribution of the other. The mission will no more be impelled by the conviction that kingdom of God is "within" one self, but perhaps "between" us.[20] The Church's mission will be oriented towards the Christian presence rather than the presence of Christians.[21] Clearly, the presence of Christians was once predominantly motivated by a desire to convert and conquer. But Christian presence implies the readiness to be corrected and complemented, besides the impulse to serve and love. We may still ask: what happens to the traditional Christian mission of conversion? Here, as Panikkar points out, the three key words of the parable of Mission theology—salt, light and leaven are very instructive.

> But should we not remember that leaven is subversive and that the leaven does not desire to convert everything into leaven? Should we remind ourselves that salt is bitter and does not desire to convert everything into salt, convert everything into something Christian, but rather that the omelet be a better omelet, the steak be a better steak, the Hindu be a better Hindu, the humanist become a better humanist?... And must we not remind ourselves that light is invisible? That when I think that I see light, I see really the enlightened and not the light itself?[22]

From Christology to Christophany

Another intercultural implication we wish to draw for a new Indian Christian Identity is the required passage from Christology to Christophany. One of the main problems that Christians face in relating themselves to people of other faiths is their understanding of Christ—particularly his uniqueness. But it is surely possible to universalize Christ without at the same time exhibiting exclusivism and fanaticism. This, of course, is a great challenge:

> To be a fully, totally orthodox Christian in which Christ for you is everything, and at the same time not be exclusivist, not be fanatic, and

> not to pay the price of tolerance and broad mindedness by diluting your Christ as one of the many "unknown Christs" in the other traditions. I don't think that Christ is one among many. I don't think that all the religions are the same. All religions are different and each is unique. The thing is that we have a kind of interpenetration; and in my understanding of Christianity, I have to somewhat incorporate all the other religions. But equally, the Hindu, in his understanding of his religion, has to also somehow incorporate all the other religions. It's a little like famous *perichoresis* of the Trinity, in which each is totally in the other and yet totally different. And that's why the Trinity is not three things—it is interrelatedness, but not three. In each are the other two. So, in an analogous way, I have to discover in my religion all the others, but without doing violence to the others. For me, Christ is the symbol of that kind of thing.
>
> Christians do not have a monopoly on Christ. Christians don't know all the dimensions of Christ. If you were a Hindu you would call it Brahman, Krishna, Atman, or whatever, and you would be discovering the aspects of which I had not any idea. And which I may never know. *But I cannot but call it Christ.* We are all in a symphony; my single voice is all I have to say, but only when everybody sings is the symphony complete.[23]

In other words, the shift from Christology to Christophany would imply a re-visioning of the usual Christology which would totally and exclusively identify Jesus of Nazareth with Christ. In the revised understanding, Christ is recognized to be much larger than that which manifested in the Jesus of Nazareth of Christianity. It is all a question of acknowledging the Christ-aspects as revealed also in other religions.[24]

Consequently, in this new vision the role and task of a Christian can no longer be that of taking Christ to somebody, but it will be more of discerning Christ that a person already is. We need here a new Christology which would recognize and accept the larger reality that Christ is. Here, we submit, comes the place and significance of Christophany—the manifestation of Christ. Christophany, in Panikkar's view, stands for the manifestation of

Christ as a symbol of totality of reality: cosmic, divine and human. For this reason, every creature and every reality, is a Christophany. Here, the problem of the uniqueness of Christ loses its rigour, as every reality is indeed unique.

From Option to Cosmic Confidence

The third implication that we wish to spell out for a new Indian Christian Identity is the envisaged shift from option for the poor to cosmic confidence as the basis of Christian commitment and action.

The present day encounter of religions exhibits an important characteristic: It is to focus its attention on the poor and downtrodden of the endangered earth. The religions of the world, with all their differences and varied visions, have begun to speak with each other with a common concern for the welfare of the victims of the earth.[25]

But this concern and commitment has always been the identifying mark of Christianity. Christianity with its "preferential option for the poor," would not like to be the second in its thirst for justice and in its efforts to uplift the poor and downtrodden. The justification of Christians is also linked with their interest and commitment to justice, which is exemplified in the Gospel words: "the Kingdom and its Justice." And Christianity will certainly have no hesitation to endorse and elaborate on the Liberation Theologians' perspective that "there can be no justification as such without justice."

The question is: Can not this Christian concern and commitment to the poor have a more solid base than options and decisions? Here comes the role of cosmic confidence from which option has to ultimately proceed. Panikkar states:

> The concern for the poor presupposes precisely a cosmic confidence. In fact, why do we get so indignant at injustice, premature deaths, and sufferings if not because we assume a cosmic confidence in reality, in which somehow we trust and believe that life cannot be so senseless, unjust and cruel as to justify such manmade

> oppressions? Is it that cosmic confidence which triggers the healthy decision of the "option?" It is the awareness of injustice, which leads to the "option." But this injustice is only detected because of our presupposition that there is a *cosmic order* which the injustice has precisely violated.[26]

Furthermore, what is the result, after all, of our "option for the poor?" Has it really been effective enough? To be sure, without the preferential option for the poor, the situation would have been worse, and much has been achieved by Christianity's conscious engagement for justice. Yet the question remains: what is our answer to those who suffer right now, in this very moment?

> Here is where traditional cultures speaking of heaven, *karma,* nirvana, God and Brahman have something essential to contribute. To realize that my life has a meaning (sense) which is *life,* even if I have been invited to the banquet of life just for a few moments, is the only saving hope for many and another exemplification of what I mean by cosmic confidence.[27]

Let us hope that a new Indian Christian Identity be open to and be increasingly guided by this cosmic confidence in the journey.

PART TWO

ADVAITA AND THE TRINITY: RAIMON PANIKKAR'S ATTEMPT AT HINDU-CHRISTIAN BRIDGE BUILDING

Before we present Panikkar's attempt at Hindu-Christian bridgebuilding, especially through his cross-cultural interpretation of the Trinity of the Christian tradition in relation to the advaitic insight of the Hindu tradition, a word on Panikkar and his enterprise.

Born of a Hindu father and a Spanish Catholic mother, thus pluralistic in his very blood, Raimon Panikkar has been striving all through his life towards the harmony of a pluralistic world. Aptly styled, 'the child of diverse cultures and the academic product of several disciplines,' 'the finest fruit of the East-West fecundation process,' Panikkar, 'one of the leading religious thinkers of our times,' and 'a man whose life and work virtually embodies the cross-cultural and interreligious dialogue of our day,' has one overriding concern: cross-cultural communication. He himself states: "I am attempting to speak a language that will make sense for the follower of more than one particular tradition—a risky task perhaps, but necessary if one is to do justice to a cross-cultural investigation."[28]

Detectable beneath all of Panikkar's work is a single but deep insight which he calls the "Radical Trinity"—a theme which our essay would like to further explore. The Radical Trinity represents, in short, Panikkar's efforts to apply the Christian trinitarian understanding of God to the trinitarian structure of the entire reality. Besides being the culmination of his thought, this insight is also a splendid and concrete example of Panikkar's efforts at Hindu-Christian bridgebuilding. It symbolizes his attempt to enlarge and deepen the Christian mystery of the trinity through the Buddhist and Hindu modes of silence and non-differentiation, effecting thus, a re-vision in the usual and prevalent understanding of advaita and the trinity, and further enabling these insights to open themselves up to a cross-fertilization.

Moreover, the Radical Trinity is a fitting example of Panikkar's cross-cultural enterprise to articulate the experience of truth in such a manner that it becomes meaningful in the different contexts of diverse cultures. To understand Panikkar's Radical Trinity, it is important, first of all, to take a brief note of the context in which it is discerned and proposed.

1. The Context of Panikkar's Cross-Cultural Contribution

Although our epoch seems to be the beginning of a second Axial Age, a 'mutational' age when the maturing fruits of the various religious traditions are on the verge of beginning to dialogue, to really speak with each other, to share and hopefully to 'cross-fertilize' and enrich one another, yet we are also equally and even painfully aware of an experience which is not all that positive and encouraging. We have been experiencing the near monopoly and dominion of certain world-views and their values, particularly the Western-Christian-Scientific-Technological one. Its main thrust seems to be a narrow anthropocentric perspective which considers human being—to be precise, a certain type of human being—as the centre of reality and sees the *logos* (more in the sense of *ratio*) as the centre of human life. This perspective seems to accord an exaggerated importance to the *logos* and seeks to reduce human awareness to the *logos* mode of awareness.

True, there is much to be said for this perspective. Yet it looks as though we need to pay a very heavy price for it. The fragmentation that has come about in our knowing and being, especially due to our dichotomized understanding of the Divine, the Human and the Cosmic is just one example of such heavy price.

Hence, we stand in need of a holistic vision of reality which will help overcome this fragmentation and also integrate the anthropocentric, the theocentric and the cosmocentric perspectives of different world-religious-traditions in such a manner that their complementary interaction will eliminate possible blind spots in each other's vision.

Consequently, this holistic vision would also attempt to overcome—not deny—the strictures of every kind of dichotomy that plagues our present epoch: the body-soul split, the sacred-secular dichotomy, the God-World-Man separation, the past-present-future compartmentalization—in short, any *part*-ial or fragmented vision of reality which is indeed at the root of many of our contemporary crises.

It is here, in the context of our search for a new, integrated and integrating experience of reality, that Panikkar's contribution becomes crucial and relevant. Frank Podgorski discerns Panikkar's contribution aptly as follows: "Drawing on mysticism as well as science, myth as well as logic, *intellectus* as well as *ratio*, heart as well as mind, he both calls for and contributes to this bold, new spiritual search, a quest mature enough to be nourished and enriched by the heritage of the entire human community."[29] We only add that the "Radical Trinity" is a simple example and expression of Panikkar's holistic search and a symbol that represents the fundamental trinitarian character of reality.

2. Panikkar's Approach: The Diatopical Hermeneutics and The Dialogical Dialogue

As we have just indicated, the context of our times demand that we gather together the insights of various religious traditions of the world, so that these insights assist and complement one another in our task of overcoming the fragmentation in our knowing and being. And Panikkar's holistic vision of reality indeed provides space where the different world-views can harmoniously meet without losing out their respective insights. In this sense, Panikkar's vision is not only an integrated one, but integrating, too. It is here we like to situate and briefly present Panikkar's diatopical hermeneutics and dialogical dialogue.

Panikkar calls his hermeneutics "diatopical" as it attempts to study and integrate the insights and wisdom of various cultures and traditions which are "spatially" (*topoi*) far apart and hence have no common cultural source. He observes: "Diatopical hermeneutics stands for the ultimate consideration of understanding the other without assuming that the other has the same basic self-understanding and understanding as I have. The ultimate human horizon and not only differing contexts, is at stake here. The method in this third[30] moment is a peculiar *dialogical dialogue*, the *dia-logos* piercing the *logos* in order to reach that dialogical, translogical realm of the heart (according to most traditions), allowing for the emergence of a myth in which we may commune, and which will ultimately allow understanding (standing under) the same horizon of intelligibility."[31]

Without elaborating much, let us only recall here two basic assumptions of Panikkar's diatopical hermeneutics: one, truth can never be totally identified with its formulation; two, it is possible to interpret a truth cross-culturally.[32] This implies that the diatopical hermeneutics has to reconcile between the universalization aspect of truth (i.e. the claim of truth) and the regionalization aspect of truth (i.e. the expression of truth). In other words, truth as such cannot have borders. If it is true, then it must be true for everybody. But truth's expression cannot have such a claim because our grasp of truth is limited, episodic, and particular due to our finitude.[33] "The original moment (and place) of discovery, however privileged it may be sociologically, is hermeneutically speaking just *a* formulation of that truth; it can never claim to be *the* formulation of the truth, much less the truth itself."[34]

This further means that no one can claim to have formulated truth exhaustively and totally. Since truth is identical with reality, the *logos* (expression) can never exhaust or be identified with it (the experience of reality or truth). In other words, reality or truth cannot be totally reduced to or grasped by the *logos* dimension, although it is an essential and constitutive dimension of reality and truth. There is also a mythical dimension which is equally an authentic mode of human awareness which in fact acts as a foundation, but recedes always to a deeper level as a depth-dimension of reality. Panikkar calls this as *Mythos* dimension. It is this dimension which serves as the basis and horizon of our understanding of reality. It is again this dimension which supports and sustains our being-in-the-world and that through which we know.[35] However, it is important to realize that both the *Logos* and the *Mythos* dimensions of reality can be distinguished, but cannot be radically separated. Panikkar states: "Myth and Logos go together, but their link is not dialectical, nor is it mythical: rather it is the link which constitutes both of them.... In other words, there is no *logos* without *mythos*—of which the *logos* is the language—and there is no *mythos* without the *logos*—of which the *mythos* is the ground."[36]

This is only an indication of the fact that every culture has its own experience and expression of the truth of reality. "But still the exigency of the unity of reality—which is manifested in the urgent need to communicate cross-culturally—urges us to make the effort to articulate the experience of truth in such a manner that it becomes meaningful in the different contexts of diverse cultures. It is here that diatopical hermeneutics becomes topical."[37]

Panikkar, of course, has provided us with a number of concrete diatopical hermeneutic interpretations. To mention a few: The Myth of Prajāpati,[38] Vedic Sacrifice,[39] The Myth of ũnaṛẽpa,[40] Karma,[41] Advaita and Bhakti,[42] The Trinity,[43] etc. These cross-cultural interpretations of Panikkar indeed illustrate how "diatopical hermeneutics tries to bring together radically different human horizon."[44]

Let us now consider for our study Panikkar's cross-cultural interpretation of the trinity of the Christian tradition in relation to the advaitic insight of the Hindu tradition. The trinity, Panikkar submits, is an integral part of the religious experience of all traditions. His cross-cultural interpretation, therefore, is only "so to enlarge and deepen the mystery of the Trinity that it may embrace this same mystery existent in other religious traditions but differently expressed."[45]

3. Advaitic Trinitarianism: Panikkar's Re-Vision of the Trinity in the Light of Advaita

A Re-Vision of Advaita

In trying to understand the nature of reality, Advaita Vedānta claims that reality is ultimately advaita, that is, "not two." That is, Brahman and the world are not two. To be sure, the Indic mind has introduced advaita to stress the negation of duality. Yet, Panikkar reminds us, and rightly so, of its temptation and tendency towards *ekatva* (i.e. monism).

The advaitic attitude is that though it does not deny the reality of the world, yet it considers the world as illusory in relation to the overwhelming reality of Brahman. Moreover, in the context of the multiplicity of the phenomenal world, the advaitic intuition indeed helps to grasp Brahman as the substratum of the phenomenal world and as the undifferentiated ground of all multiplicity and differentiation. In any case, monism or monistic oneness is what seems to be characterizing, in the main, the above advaitic spirit.

We submit that Panikkar does not share this vision of advaita. He makes an attempt to overcome the monistic temptation of advaita, by getting into its very etymology, and thus makes a re-vision in the advaitic notion. The "not two" of a-dvaita inspires Panikkar to affirm that the subject and the object are not two, without being one. "Reality is neither one nor two. It is not one, for we cannot deny evidence: we experience multiplicity. It is not two, for we cannot deny that any duality, epistemologically, logically and metaphysically presupposes an underlying unity which allows that it be doubted, as it were."[46] It is here, we like to situate Panikkar's "Triadic Oneness." More about this later.

We further submit that this re-vision of advaita by Panikkar only seems to be in tune with the understanding of the advaitic insight in an original way. The PuruÇasâkta hymn of the Ṛg Veda (10. 90), for example, expresses the same intuition when revealing to us the character of creation sacrifice; its all-embracing function in which the entire universe is involved. It is neither a merely divine affair, nor a purely human endeavour, nor a blind cosmic process; it is human, divine and cosmic all in one. It is cosmotheandric: God, Man and the Universe are correlates.[47]

Or again, we see this insight coming alive in the classic "e*kam eva advitīyam*" (one only without a second) of Chāndogya Upaniṣad when it expresses that the unity of reality is not a monistic oneness but advaitic which is neither one nor two. In this context, Panikkar observes: "This one, this *ekam*, is qualified in a special way. It is, in fact, the qualifying word, *advitīya* (non-twoness), which renders the affirmation of oneness fruitful."[48]

Hence, advaita is not monism. But "it is only in denying the apparent duality of reality, without falling into the temptation of putting everything into one bag, that we may approach the advaitic intuition in an intelligible way."[49] We may say even describe this as the dynamism of the two toward the one, without ceasing to be different.

Furthermore, for Panikkar, advaita represents the overcoming of rationalism without abandoning the intellect. The advaitic intuition is not the denial of reason but the transcending of it. He advances his nuanced argument as follows:

Advaita does not say that Being *is* non-dual. If Being were non-dual (and not-plural), we think logically it would have to be one. This is monism. *Advaita* says that Being *is-not* dual, that duality *is-not* the case. And it adds further that Being *is-not* one. *Advaita* does not make an objective statement about reality: "Being is not-two." If not-two includes also not-three, etc., the rational deduction would be that "Being is one." To deny it would amount to plain contradiction. *Advaita* refuses the *is* (one or two) and says instead Being is-not—one or two. Being has no predicate. The *is* of our rational thinking does not need to be identical with the Being of our awareness. It challenges, precisely, objectivity on the ultimate level, because it discovers that our own thinking is equally non-dual; it cannot be reduced to an absolute unity; it is constitutively polar. It challenges subjectivity equally, precisely because it refuses to postulate the necessary transparency of reality to our thinking, to any thinking. Thinking and Being are two irreducible "dimensions" of reality, dimensions which are neither identical (monism) nor different (dualism).[50]

In short, for Panikkar, "the negation of both a dualistic and a monistic structure of reality, because of the fact that we cannot bring reality into an intelligible oneness is the very core of *advaita*."[51]

The Trinity in the Light of Advaita

Panikkar perceives the Christian doctrine of the trinity in the light of the above revised understanding of advaita. He applies the advaitic (non-dualistic) relation to the mutual relationship of the persons in the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Ewert H. Cousins characterizes this application most fittingly as "Advaitic Trinitarianism."[52] In this advaitic trinitarianism, as we shall soon elucidate, Panikkar is guided by two assumptions: one, the trinity is an integral part of the religious experience of all traditions. Hence the trinitarian understanding cannot be the monopoly of Christianity. This means that aspects of the mystery of the trinity can be discerned in different cultural/religious traditions, which may even further enhance the submerged Christian understanding; second, these religions and cultures with their characteristic other modes of perception may also help to overcome the *logos*-centred/ God-centred Christian understanding of the trinity. It is here we like to situate Panikkar's enterprise of bringing to light the role of the Indic advaitic insight.

Without spelling out much the elaborate and nuanced treatment of Panikkar's trinity[53] we only like to recall it here through the summary statement of Panikkar himself: "It is the trinitarian dance by which the Father empties himself from all that "he" is, and so does the Son, and so does the Spirit, in order that life goes on giving and receiving. In other words, each "person" is fully in the other one; they are circumincessional as it were."[54] Perhaps Cousins' insightful recapitulation of Panikkar's reflections on the Trinity is still more helpful:

> In his discussion of the Trinity, Panikkar describes three aspects of the divinity and three corresponding forms of spirituality: (1) the silent, apophatic dimension, which he relates to the Father, since the Father expresses himself only through the Son and of himself has no word or expression; (2) the personalistic dimension, which Panikkar relates to the Son, since the Son is the personal mediator between God and man, through whom creation, redemption, and glorification flow; and (3) the immanent dimension, which Panikkar relates to the Spirit, since the Spirit is the union of the Father and the Son. According to Panikkar the apophatic spirituality of the Father is similar to the buddhist experience of nirvana. The personalist spirituality of the Son has its roots in Yahweh's revelation to the Jews; from the Christian perspective, its completion is the person of Christ. The immanent spirituality of the Spirit has its resonance in the advaitan Hindu doctrine of the non-duality of the self and the Absolute.[55]

For our purpose we like only to highlight here Panikkar's discernment of the correlation of the immanent spirituality of the Spirit with advaita. He believes that the advaitic relation between

God and the world can throw some light on the intra-trinitarian problem in Christianity. "If the Father and the Son are not *two,* they are not one either: the Spirit both unites and distinguishes them. He is the bond of unity: the *we* in between, or rather within."[56]

Hence Panikkar discovers the Spirit as basically the spirit of communion and the unity between *I* and *Thou* resulting in *we.* "The Spirit 'in himself' is a contradiction. There is only the Spirit of God, of the Father and Son. He is the One sent. He is neither an I who speaks to another, nor a Thou to whom someone else speaks, but rather the *we* between the Father and the Son—that *we* which encompasses also the whole universe in a peculiar way."[57]

It is here we like to highlight Panikkar's discernment of the contribution of the Hindu tradition towards understanding the mystery of the Spirit. "It is to this Spirit that most of the upanisadic assertions about the Absolute point, when seen in their deepest light. One could cite almost every page of the Upanisads for example. Indeed what is the Spirit but the *atman* of the Upanisads, which is said to be identical with *brahman,* although this identity can only be existentially recognized and affirmed once 'realization' has been attained?"[58]

Just as an aspect of the trinity, namely the unity of the Spirit, is highlighted by the advaitic insight of the Hindu tradition, so too, Panikkar believes, the advaitic intuition brings in some modes of discerning the trinity other than the *logos.* He is convinced that the recognition of these modes present in other cultures of the world, would certainly assist in liberating the *logos*-centred trinitarian understanding of Christianity. Cousins' remarks are once again pertinent here: "While not rejecting the Logos-centered Trinitarianism, Panikkar also perceives the Trinity from outside the Logos/logos historical-cultural context of the west: from the silence of Buddhism and the unity of Hinduism. When one plunges into the mystery of this silence and this unity, the differentiation constituted by the Logos do not appear. Yet they are not absorbed into an all-encompassing monistic One; they remain in the advaitic sense described above: as not-two."[59]

In other words, the advaitic intuition reveals the non-*logos* structure of the trinity. The *logos* dimension in it is not all that there is, neither can it enable us to grasp fully the mystery of the trinity. There are other ways and modes of perception, namely, silence and the sense of immersion in unity, which assist us better in penetrating deeper into this mystery. It is in this spirit we may also better understand the "indescribable" and "inexhaustible" nature of reality, and the upaniṣadic "*neti neti*" (not this, not that) approach.

4. Trinitarian Advaitism: Paṇikkar's Re-Vision of Advaita in the Light of the Trinity

A Re-Vision of the Trinity

Panikkar's re-vision of the trinity consists in his attempt to enlarge the Christian trinitarian understanding of God to the trinitarian structure of the entire reality. This, in short, is Panikkar's "Radical Trinity." "The Trinitarian intuition is neither an exclusive Christian doctrine, nor a monopoly of 'God.' It reveals the most fundamental character of Reality. Being is trinitarian."[60]

Moreover, for Panikkar, reflection on the Trinity is not merely a speculation about the life of God, but it is also to do with the height and depth of man and the world. Hence it is a revelation not only of God, but it is equally of the human and the universe. He notes: "A divine Trinity severed from human history and the cosmos would remain a museum piece in a theological cabinet."[61]

Hence the ultimate revelation of the trinity, for Panikkar, is the trinitarian structure of reality, of the triadic oneness existing in all levels of consciousness and reality. This oneness, as we shall try to explicate more in the next section, is not a monistic oneness but a triadic oneness which is neither one nor many. It is here we like to situate and briefly elucidate Panikkar's Cosmotheandric Vision of Reality[62] which he believes to be an emerging religious consciousness of our times and which is only another name for the Radical Trinity.

Coining the word "cosmotheandric" Panikkar reflects on the three irreducible dimensions of reality: *Cosmos, Theos* and *Anthropos* (*bhautika-daivika-tmika*: Earthly, Divine and Human). He maintains that these are the three constitutive dimensions of anything that "is" which can be distinguished for heuristic purposes, but not severed or separated from one another. That is, all reality or whatever "is" is relational. This intuition, then, seeks to recover the foundational, trinitarian structure underlying every reality.

Panikkar has different formulations for cosmotheandrism. We just quote a few of them. "There is a kind of *perichoresis*, 'dwelling within one another' of these three dimensions of reality—the Divine, the Human and the Cosmic—the *I*, the *you* and the *it*."[63] Or again, "The cosmotheandric principle could be stated by saying that the divine, the human and the earthly—however we may prefer to call them—are the three irreducible dimensions which constitute the real, i.e. any reality inasmuch as it is real."[64] And finally, "The times begin to be ripe now to gather again the broken pieces of these partial insights into a new wholistic vision: there is no matter without spirit and no spirit without matter, no World without Man, no God without the Universe, etc. God, Man and World are three artificially substantivized forms of the three primordial adjectives which describe Reality."[65]

The last formulation, more than others, clearly indicates that we have one non-dual (advaitic) reality, which is trinitarian. There is no separate thing or being as God, or world, or human being. We always have a reality which is cosmic, divine and human—all at once. Hence Panikkar's re-vision of the trinity implies that the trinity is not the monopoly of God, much less of the God of Christianity. Every reality is trinitarian.

Advaita in the Light of the Trinity

In the light of the above trinitarian vision of reality, Panikkar discerns the oneness not as a monistic oneness, but a triadic oneness which is neither one, nor two. We would like to characterize this discernment of Panikkar as "Trinitarian Advaitism." The essence of this trinitarian advaitism is that the Divine and the Cosmic and/or the Human are not two, without being one. In other words, it is the dynamism of the many toward the one without, however, ceasing to be different, and without reaching a higher synthesis. Reality is three-dimensional: cosmic-divine-human. These three dimensions of reality can be distinguished, but cannot be separated.

The trinitarian advaitism further reminds us that reality cannot be reduced to any one of its constitutive dimensions. Panikkar's intuition of the trinity contests the ultimate belief of every idealistic monism that there is a Being or Reality that encompasses all that there is and that Reality is Pure Consciousness (*jñāna-svarūpa*). It is this belief which also conceives being to be self-intelligible in the sense that it is totally transparent to the light of the intellect and is absolutely pervaded by *cit, nous* or mind, whatever.[66]

We should, however, clarify that Panikkar's trinitarian advaitism does not deny that *logos, nous, cit* or by whatever name we may call this dimension as an essential dimension of reality. It only contests that reality is totally reducible to it. That is, consciousness is not the only dimension of reality—reality has other dimensions, too. Panikkar's vision points to the Matter, for instance, or the Spirit which cannot be totally reduced to the *logos*. Each reality presents a mysterious aspect that defies a total transparency and total explanation. For Panikkar, this is precisely the *locus* of freedom. As he puts it, there "is" also *sat* (being) and *Ānanda* (joy), besides *cit* (consciousness) to being or reality.[67] Reality is, therefore, *satcitānanda,* cosmotheandric (cosmic-divine-human); it is always a relationship between these three dimensions. In a word, for Panikkar, consciousness is real, but the real is not only consciousness.

This leads us to reflect upon another important dimension of Panikkar's trinitarian advaitism: the symbolic awareness of reality. If reality is basically a symbol, then it cannot be fully grasped or exhausted by the *logos* dimension or objectification of reason. Though reality is constituted by the *logos* (the objectifying or human) dimension, yet it is equally governed by the Matter (the objectifiable) and the Divine (non-objectifiable) dimensions which escape any total objectification. Furthermore, in the cosmotheandric and symbolic experience of reality, the symbolizer (the Human) is invited, or even expected, to recognize the symbolized (the Divine) in and through the symbol (the Cosmic). Cosmos, then, is a very symbol of the Divine. In the same measure, temporality is a symbol of eternity; matter, of spirit; secular, of sacred; outer, of inner; material, of spiritual, and so on. Thus, trinitarian advaitism indeed proposes to assist us, in the fundamental task of overcoming the dichotomized ways of our thinking and being.

5. The Radical Trinity: Advaitic Trinitarianism and Trinitarian Advaitism

We now recall the cross-fertilization and the bridgebuilding exercise that we alluded to in the beginning of this part of the essay. Panikkar's Advaitic Trinitarianism (a re-vision of the trinity in the light of advaita) throws light on the advaitic (non-dualistic) nature of the Persons of the trinity, nay, the entire reality, besides bringing to the forefront other modes of perceiving or experiencing the trinity. Trinitarian Advaitism (a re-vision of advaita in the light of the trinity), on the other hand, tries to overcome the advaitic tendency towards monistic oneness (*ekatva*) by discovering the foundational, trinitarian structure underlying every reality. Reality being trinitarian, it can never be totally reduced to or exhausted by any one of its dimensions, even if it is the dimension of "Pure Consciousness," *Cit, Nous, Logos* or Mind. All the three dimensions of reality (the cosmic, the divine and the human) belong together, one is not without the other.

To be sure, both "Advaitic Trinitarianism" and "Trinitarian Advaitism" are only pointers to, or to be viewed in the backdrop of, the "Radical Trinity"—the universal trinitarian structure of reality, which, Panikkar believes, to be an emerging religious consciousness of our times. But this radical trinity perhaps demands from all of us a radical response—a response to be responsible enough to contribute, and also get corrected in, our "long held" and "most cherished" insights of our respective religious traditions.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1 The ideas contained in Part One of this essay have also been presented in Anthony Savari Raj, "Inculturation or Interculturation?: Towards a New Indian Christian Identity in a Pluralistic Society," Philosophy, Culture, and Traditions, ed. William Sweet, Canada: St. Francis Xavier University, Vol. 1, 2002, pp. 27–40.

For the considerations in Part Two, cf. Anthony Savari Raj "The Radical Trinity: Raimon Panikkar's Re-Vision of Advaita and the Trinity," Crossing the Borders. Essays in Honour of Francis X. D'Sa on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday, eds. Anand Amaladass and Rosario Rocha, Satya Nilayam Publications, Chennai 2001, pp. 179–92.

2 Arun Shourie, *Missionaries in India. Continuities, Changes, Dilemmas* (Delhi: ASA Publications, 1994), p. 224.

3 *Acta Apostolica Sedis* XI (1919): 453, as quoted in Raimon Panikkar, "The Crux of Christian Ecumenism: Can Universality and Chosenness be held Simultaneously?", *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, 26: 1, Winter 1989, p. 93.

4 Arun Shourie, *Missionaries in India*, op. cit., p. 200.

5 Cf. T.K. John, "IMAGE. Image of the Christians Presented in India Today," *The Church in India in Search of a New Identity* (Bangalore: N.B.C.L.C., 1997), p. 145. Henceforth as CISNI.

6 Paul Puthanangadi, "Christian Community as a Multi-Cultural Reality," *CISNI*, p. 183.

7 Cf. Panikkar, "Trisangam: Jordan, Tiber, and Ganges," *A Dwelling Place for Wisdom* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), esp. pp. 134–9.

8 Cf. John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, p. 72.

9 *Epistle to Diognetus*, Ch. 5, as quoted in Paul Puthanangadi, CISNI, p. 181.

10 Kurien Kunnumpuram, et al., "Introduction," *CISNI*, p. 7.

11 CBCI, *Report of the General Meeting*, Calcutta, 1974, p. 128.

12 Cf. Sebasti L. Raj, "Future of the Indian Church: Reflections and Proposals in the Light of CBCI Evaluation," Jeevadhara, Vol. XXVIII, No. 166, p. 287.

13 Cf. Ibid., p. 288.

14 Panikkar, "Modern Science and Technology are Neither Neutral nor Universal," *Europe-Asia: Science and Technology for their Future* (Zurich: Forum Engelberg, 26–28 March 1996), p. 209.

15 For an elaborate study of this Vision and its implications, particularly from an Indian perspective and experience, cf. Anthony Savari Raj, *A New*

Hermeneutic of Reality. Raimon Panikkar's Cosmotheandric Vision (Peter Lang: Bern, Berlin, Frankfurt/M, New York, Paris, Wien, 1998), esp. pp. 91–103.

16 Cf. Panikkar, "The Dialogical Dialogue," *The World's Religious Traditions. Current Perspectives in Religious Studies*, Whaling F., ed., (Edinburgh, 1984), pp. 201–21.

17 Cf. Francis X. D' Sa, "The Nature of Religion: Reflections on Nature and Religion," *Dialogue and Alliance. A Journal of the International Religious Foundation*, Vol. 9, No. 2, pp. 34–55.

18 It means simply this: Each tradition in its ultimate aspects claims or aspires to the *totum* (for instance, Christ is thus not an avatara among others or Siva just a God in the world-pantheon), but sees the *totum* in parte in one's own categories. Hence authentic tolerance does not require chopping off particular opinions. One does not need to dilute one's own religious commitments in order to accept those of the other. Cf. Panikkar, "The Invisible Harmony: A Universal Theory of Religion or a Cosmic Confidence in Reality?", *Toward a Universal Theology of Religion*, Leonard Swidler, ed. (New York: Orbis Books, 1987), pp. 139–40.

19 Cf. Panikkar, "What is Comparative Philosophy Comparing?", *Interpreting Across Boundaries. New Essays in Comparative Philosophy*, Gerald James Larson and Eliot Deutsch, eds. (Princeton University Press, 1988), pp. 122–8. Here Panikkar argues that, strictly speaking, Comparative Philosophy of Religion or Religions is not possible, because we do not have any neutral platform outside every tradition where comparison may be drawn. We cannot compare (*comparare*—that is, to treat on an equal-par basis), for, there is no *fulcrum* outside. He further suggests that we can only *imparare*—that is, learn from the other by opening ourselves from our standpoint, to a dialogical dialogue that does not seek to win or convince, but to search together from our different vantage points.

20 Cf. "Interview: Raimondo Panikkar," *Epiphany. A Journal of Faith and Insight*, Vol. 3, No. 4, (Summer 1983), pp. 30–1.

21 Cf. Panikkar, "Present-day University Education and World Cultures," *Interculture*, Vol. XVIII, No. 3, Issue 88, p. 12.

22 Panikkar, "The Future of Mission," *Interculture*, Fall/October, '87, No. 97, p. 26.

23 "Interview: Raimondo Panikkar," *Epiphany*, op. cit., p. 28.

24 Cf. R. Panikkar, *The Unknown Christ of Hinduism*. Indian Edition. (Bangalore: Asian Trading Corporation, 1982).

25 Cf. Felix Wilfred, *Asian Dreams and Christian Hope at the Dawn of the Millennium* (Delhi: ISPCK, 2000), p. xvii.

26 Panikkar, "A Self-Critical Dialogue," *The Intercultural Challenge of Raimon Panikkar*, ed. Joseph Prabhu (New York: Orbis Books, 1996), p. 280. Henceforth as *ICRP*.

27 Ibid., pp. 283–4.

28 R. Panikkar, *Myth, Faith and Hermeneutics* (Bangalore: Asian Trading Corporation, 1983), p. 381. Henceforth as *MFH*.

29 Frank Podgorski, "The Cosmotheandric Intuition: The Contemplative Catalyst of Raimon Panikkar," *ICRP*, p. 110.

30 Here we like to insert a note on the other two moments as pointed out by Panikkar. Panikkar refers to the morphological and diachronical hermeneutics as the first and second moments. The former attempts at bridging a factual gap, the latter is the effort at closing a temporal gap. Cf. Panikkar, "Cross-Cultural Studies. The Need for a New Science of Interpretation," *Monchanin* 50 (June-December, 1975), p. 14.

31 Panikkar, *MFH*, p. 9.

32 For an insightful elucidation of these two assumptions, cf. Francis X. D'Sa, "The Notion of God," *ICRP*, p. 28.

33 Cf. Ibid.

34 Ibid.

35 For a clear and elaborate treatment of these two dimensions of reality, cf. D'Sa, "The Interreligious Dialogue of the Future," *Vidyajyothi*, Vol. 61, No. 10 (October 1997), pp. 698–700.

36 Panikkar, "Philosophy as Life-Style," *Philosophers on their Own Work*, eds. A. Mercier, M. Svilar, Vol. 4 (Bern, Frankfurt am Main, Las Vegas, 1978), p. 202.

37 D'Sa, "The Notion of God," *ICRP*, p. 29.

38 Cf. Panikkar, *MFH*, pp. 66–95.

39 Cf. Panikkar, *The Vedic Experience.* Mantrama–jarī́. An Anthology of the Vedas for Modern Man and Contemporary Celebration. Indian Edition. (Pondicherry: All India Books, 1989), pp. 346-432. Henceforth as *VE.*

40 Cf. Panikkar, *MFH*, pp. 98–184.

41 Cf. Panikkar, *MFH*, p. 238.

42 Cf. Panikkar, *MFH*, pp. 278–9.

43 Cf. Panikkar, The Trinity and the Religious Experience of Man. Icon-Person-Mystery (London: Orbis Books, 1973). Henceforth as *TREM.*

44 Panikkar, "Philosophy as Life-Style," op.cit., p. 205.

45 Panikkar, *TREM*, p. 42.

46 Panikkar, "A Self-Critical Dialogue," *ICRP*, p. 275.

47 Cf. Panikkar, *VE*, p. 73.

48 Ibid., p. 656.

49 Panikkar, "A Self-Critical Dialogue," *ICRP*, p. 275.

50 Ibid.

51 Ibid.

52 Cf. Ewert H. Cousins, "Panikkar's Advaitic Trinitarianism," *ICRP*, pp. 119–30.

53 The following two books may be mentioned as Panikkar's major writings on the Trinity.

1. *The Unknown Christ of Hinduism.* op. cit. In this work, Panikkar focuses on the Logos (i.e. the Son) dimension of the Trinity.
2. *The Trinity and the Religious Experience of Man*, op. cit. Here, Panikkar deals with the entire Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit and he also explores the mystery of the Trinity from the standpoint of spirituality.

54 Panikkar, "A Self-Critical Dialogue," *ICRP*, p. 276.

55 Ewert H. Cousins, "Raimundo Panikkar and the Christian Systematic Theology of the Future," *Cross Currents* 29 (Summer 1979), p. 147.

56 Panikkar, *TREM*, p. 62.

57 Ibid.

58 Ibid, pp. 63–4.

59 Cousins, "Panikkar's Advaitic Trinitarianism," *ICRP*, p. 129.

60 Panikkar, Programme for the Gifford Lectures, University of Edinburgh, 1988/89, p. 1.

61 Panikkar, "A Self-Critical Dialogue," *ICRP*, p. 272.

62 For an elaborate treatment of this vision, cf. Panikkar, The Cosmotheandric Experience. Emerging Religious Consciousness (New York: Orbis Books, 1993).

63 Panikkar, "The Myth of Pluralism: The Tower of Babel—A Meditation on Non-Violence," *Cross Currents* 29, p. 217.

64 Panikkar, *The Cosmotheandric Experience*, op. cit., p. 60.

65 Panikkar, "Philosophy as Life-Syle," op. cit., p. 206.

66 Cf. Panikkar, "The Invisible Harmony," p. 129.

67 Cf. Ibid., p. 130.

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Iravati

Theatre: Brāhmaṇ and Śramaṇ Approach —A Saga of Rejection and Acceptance

Theatre always had an important place in religion in ancient India. Initially it was in the form of certain rituals and later it became a special feature of religious festivals also. With the passage of time Brāhmaṇ śāstrakaras adopted a prohibitive attitude towards theatre primarily as it stimulated erotic feelings and secondly because of the immoral life style of theatre artistes that was considered an evil effect on the mind of people. This was so with the Śramaṇa tradition also. But gradually a new potential in theatre was noticed by Brāhmaṇ and Śramaṇ religions—it was taken as a most suitable and effective means of propagating the faith. The prohibition may be taken as the influence of Śramaṇ tradition on Brāhmaṇ and later its adaptation as means to propagate Dharma may be the influence of the latter on the former.

During the Vedic period we find theatrical arts were included in religion in the form of certain rituals. For example, the *Mahāvrata* ceremony, one of the Śrauta rites, which is described in detail by the authors of the Śrauta sūtras and discussed in other Vedic texts as Śāṅkhāyan Āraṇyaka[1] contains an exchange of abuse between a brahmachārī and a hetaera, dance performance by maidens and singing by married women. Dance was performed in Satrayaṇand Aitareya sacrifices, too.[2] There is a reference to a religious festival in Aitareya Āraṇyaka,[3] when the priest mounted the temple swing to imitate the course of sun. Śatapath Brāhmaṇ[4] and Gopath

Brāhmaṇ[5] mention an interesting dialogue between the buyer and seller of soma in the ritual soma trade. Kātyān Śrauta sūtra[6] refers to the performance of the theatrical arts in connection with Pitṛimedh. In the Horse sacrifice (Aśwamedh) Brāhmaṇ and warriors alike were called to sing.[7] On the day of letting loose of the sacrificial horse, the *Veeṇāgāthins* (i.e. the musicians who sang to the accompaniment of all sorts of lutes as explained by the commentator) were required to sing the praise of the sacrificer along with those of the just King of ancient times. Such *Veeṇāgāthins* were invited to some domestic rites, too, such as on the occasion of *Seemāntonnayan* ceremony, performed on expectant mother where the husband had to ask two *Veeṇāgāthins* to sing about the king of anybody else who was still more valiant.[8]

Epics also refer to the performance of dance and music by *naṭa, nartaka, vaitālika, sūta, māgadha,* etc. on occasion of sacrifice.[9]

Gradually theatrical shows became important part of religious festivals like *'Indradhwajotsava'*, a festival held in honour of Indra. This probably had its origin in Ṛgveda[10] and continued during later centuries, too[11] having dance and music as its important part.

Folk cults of *Yakṣa, Nāga, Guhyaka, etc.*, that may have prevedic origin, had festivals like '*Maha*' and *'Jātrā'* held in honour of these deities, having theatrical shows as their special feature. They are mentioned in Brāhmaṇa and Śramaṇa literature alike. Bharata[12] also states that playing musical instruments, singing and dancing appease *Yakṣa, Nāga, Guhyaka, Daitya, Dānawa and Rakṣhasas.*

In Jainism though enjoyment of such festivals were censured, theatrical arts were recognized and festivals like *Indra Maha, Skanda Maha, Jakkha Maha, Bhūta Maha,* having theatrical shows find mention in Jain texts like *Niśītha Sūtra,*[13] *Jakkha Jatta, Bhūta Jatta and Nayī Jattā.*

The tradition of dramatic performance on special festive occasion is also known from Jain texts. Different types of *Nāṭya Vidhi* and *Abhinaya* were performed on occasion of Suryābhadeva's *Indrābhiṣeka,* mentioned in the Jain text '*Rājapraśneyī Sūtra*'.[14] According to another episode Śakra, the King of Gods ordered that he was going to hold a festival to celebrate the birth of Bhagwān

Ṛṣabhadeva, all the gods should come fully prepared for the celebration with their dramas, musical instruments and dance, etc.[15] Thus it seems that theatrical shows were performed on religious festivals in Jainism.

But since such festivals stimulate erotic feelings, Buddha was not in favour of them; monks were debarred from attending such festivals where actors used to sing songs and cut crude jokes, often evoking laughter by indecent gestures and queer movements of the body. In Brahmajāla Sūtta of Dīghnikāya[16] Buddha says "Gautạm the recluse refrains from being a spectator at shows at fairs, with 'Nauch' dances, singing and music". He further says with regret "Where as some recluse and Brāhmaṇas while living on the food provided by the faithfuls, continue to be addicted to visiting shows.[17]

Jain view in this regard was not different from that of Buddha. These festivals with music, dance and shouting were regarded as disturbing elements in the study of monks. The Śramaṇas were asked not to study, on festival days as it was impossible to concentrate due to din of music.[18]

Though theatrical arts had an important place in religious rituals, Dharmaśāstric view, that accepts Veda as its authority, also does not seem very different from that of Buddha, as we find similar instructions for *snātaka* at the time of *Samāvartan Saṁskāra*, expecting him to keep away from such festivals or performances. Pāraskar says[19] that a *snātaka* should not practice dance and music—vocal and instrumental. Āpastaṁba[20] forbade a student's entry into a sabha or a *samāja* and exhorted him not to witness any dancing obviously because such arts stimulate erotic feeling. Since festivals like *samāja* had such performances as their special features, Brāhmaṇic śāstrakāras expected students not to visit them. Manu[21] warns Brāhmaṇas against involving themselves with dramatic arts and states that a king, who is involved in *Kāmaja Varga*, i.e. in vices, loses Dharma and Artha. He explains *Kāmaja Varga* as *'Tauyatrika'* i.e. dancing, singing and playing on musical instruments,[22] this means that too much indulgence of a king in dramatic arts destroys his kingdom and prosperity.

This prohibitive attitude of Brāhmaṇa Śāstrakāras may have been due to the influence of Śramaṇa tradition that was preaching abstinence from indulgence in such arts that may take one away from his spiritual path. Another reason may have been the life style of theatre artistes that is mentioned in Brāhmaṇa and Śramaṇa literature. From the very beginning there was some vulgarity in their shows. In Ṛgveda Uṣas is compared with dancer who reveals her beauty by removing darkness as a dancer bares her bosom to audience.[23] The picture of the theatre artistes that emerges from Buddhist texts is that of an entertainer, who was ill-famed and had lower status in society. In Jātakas female artistes appear as temptress.[24] A *naṭa* is described as a tricky person who wins property by relating ill tales.[25] Avadāna Śataka[26] refers to an obscene dance of the actress Kuvalayā, who bared her body shamelessly while dancing. There are many such references in ancient Indian literature. This might have been the reason behind this prohibitive attitude of Brāhmaṇa and Śramaṇa traditions towards theatre.

But in spite of this prohibitive attitude theatre continued to be an irresistible attraction and continued to hold an important place in *Pūjā-vidhis*, even monks could not remain unaffected by its attraction. *Chullavagga*[27] refers to two monks, Assaji and Punabbasu of Kīṭagiri hills, who were very fond of theatrical shows; they used to spread their drapery and ask the danseuse to dance over it. For this they were expelled from the Saṁgha.

It is interesting to note that gradually this prohibitive attitude, not only of Brāhmaṇa but of Śramaṇa tradition also, changed and theatre was accepted as an essential part of Pūjā-vidhi and also as a very effective means of the propagation of the faith.

That music and dance had become a form of ritualistic worship in Brāhmaṇic temples during the second century BC, is known from Patañjali, who states that the temples of Rama, Keśava and Kuber vibrated with the sound of *Mṛidang, Saṅkh and Paṇava.*[28]

It is more clearly mentioned in Brāhmaṇic literature that theatrical shows are dear to God. The concept of Vedic Viṣṇu and Rudra grew into independent religions. Bhagvat Vāsudeva of Bhāgavat cult and Vāsudeva Krisṇa of the cult of this Vṛiṣṇi hero, were identified with Viṣṇu who says in Bhāgavat Purāṇa[29] that he is immensely pleased by the enactment of his līlā (divine acts). In Harivaṁśa Purāṇa,[30] it is said that the performer of *Chalikya* dance is dear to Lord Nārāyaṇa and Agni Purāṇa[31] enjoins that devotees should arrange *Yātrā* in honour of deities, full of dancing, singing and sounding of musical instruments. Gradually Devadāsī system—dedicating a permanent female attendant to gods, well versed in dance and music, came into being. Padma Purāṇa states that one, who offers beautiful maidens to god, attains heaven for one full kalpa.[32] Bhaviṣya Purāṇa states that one who consecrates a bevy of women, in honour of Sun god, goes to the highest region where shines the Sun.[33]

In Hindu pantheon Śiva is called the supreme dancer (*Naṭarāja*). In Pāśupata sect of Śaivism, *Nṛitya and Geetā* are parts of the *vidhi* or path or method that leads towards *Dukkhāṅta* or salvation. An ancient dramatic form *'Daṅda Naṭa'* is still known in Orissa. The presiding deity of this dramatic form is Śiva.

Nāṭamaṅdapas were made in Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva temples. The devotional Vaiṣṇavism stressed the importance of theatrical arts as a means of salvation and also as the best form of *Pūjā-vidhi. Rāmlīlā, Rasalīlā* of Uttar Pradesh, *Aṅkiyā naṭa* of Assam, *Kṛiṣṇāṭṭam* of Kerala etc. have their association with religion and are performed with great devotion. They also propagate the doctrines of the faith in the garb of entertainment. This strong Brāhmaṇical tradition, it seems, had some indirect influence of Śramaṇa tradition, too.

Jainism had a tradition of using theatrical shows as a form of *Pūjā-vidhi* as we know from Jain literature. We find some sculptural evidence of this type of *Pūjā-vidhi*—for example a female dancer is depicted at Rani Gumpha cave[34] indicating recognition of such performance in Jainism. Another example is a frieze from Mathura (2nd century BC) that represents a danseuse presenting a dance to the gathered audience. A small Digaṁbara male figure holding a *mayūrapichchha* is seen among the audience. This scene is taken as representing the dance of Aparā Neelaṅjanā in honour of Bhagwān Ṛhabhadeva mentioned in Ādi Purāṇa of Jinasenāchārya.[35]

According to *Piṅdaniryukti*, a Jain monk named Asādhabhūti wrote a play on the life of the monarch Bharata, which was staged at Patalipurta. The play so powerfully projected the philosophy of asceticism that many kings abandoned their kingdom after witnessing it. Fearing that no Kṣhatriya will remain to rule the earth if this continued, the play was destroyed. This is a good example of how theatre can be a medium of propagation of religious philosophy.

Jain works like Tiloyapannati give description of a *Nāṭyaśālā* a theatre hall with 32 platforms with 32 dancers singing and dancing on them in honour of Tirthaṅkaras. The Jain temples at Halebidu in Karnataka have been provided with beautiful *Navaraṅga* hall with circular dancing floor. Queen Sāntalā Devī performed before the images of Tirthaṅkaras.

Jalore (*Rajasthan*) stone inscription of Samar Singhdeva records the construction of *Sri Kvaravihāra* by Chalukya Kumāpāla deva. The Sanskrit inscription clearly points out a tradition in the Jain *Vihāras* of performing plays on festive occasions before the image of Lord Mahāvīra.[36]

Emperor Aśoka following Buddha saw many faults in such gathering as *samāja* on the same grounds, as we know from his rock-edict I, but he, too, did not object to other type of *samāja* and approved them as '*Sādhumatā*', as they represented '*Divyānī Rūpāni*', '*Vimāna Dasana*', '*Hasti Dasana*' mentioned in rock-edict IV—probably they were in tradition of *Yātrā* festivals in which Buddhist symbols were carried in procession and therefore there was nothing objectionable in them. We have sculptural representation of such *Samāj* from Amarāvati. The panel showing the descent of Buddha from heaven depicts a palanquin carrying an effigy of an elephant, the symbol of Buddha, surrounded by people, dancing and singing.[37]

A change is noticed in the attitude of Buddhist Saṁgha also towards theatre—a dance and music scene represented in Ajanta cave No. 10 (Second Century BC) shows female dancers and musicians performing near the bodhi tree. Yazdani[38] thinks that these women belong to the orchestra attached to the monastery. Perhaps they were invited to perform on occasion of some religious festival.

Chinese travellers record that theatre artistes were invited in *Vihāras* and represented the stories of *Pravajyā* of Sāriputra, Maudgalyāyana and others.[39]

Figure of a danseuse, performing classical style of dance, flanked by female musicians, represented in cave No. 7 Aurangabad (c.6th century AD) suggests that probably dance by female artistes had taken the form of ritual in Buddhist religious establishments, as was in Brāhmanical temples.[40]

It'sing states that king Sīlāditya (Harṣavardhana) had written a play on the life of Bodhisattva Jimutavahana. He had it performed by a band of actors accompanied by dancing and acting and thus popularized it in his times.

It is interesting to note that not only Brāhmaṇical but Buddhist temples of early medieval period, especially of eastern India, had Devadāsīs. The Ratnagiri copper plate inscriptions of the Somavaṁśī king Karṇa, who flourished in the early twelfth century records a grant to karpūrśrī, who was Devadāsī and who was "hailing from the great Buddhist monastery at Solanpura.[41] An inscription from Gaya mentions Raṁbhā like *Bhāwinīs and Cheṭīs* as dancing and singing in the Buddhist shrine. This was far away from the teachings of Buddha and may be taken as Brāhmaṇic influence over Mahāyāna Buddhism.

This study shows that this significant interaction between Brāhmaṇa and Śramaṇa traditions had an indirect influence on the development of sculptural and theatrical arts in ancient India as they gave support to them and also opened new doors of development for them.

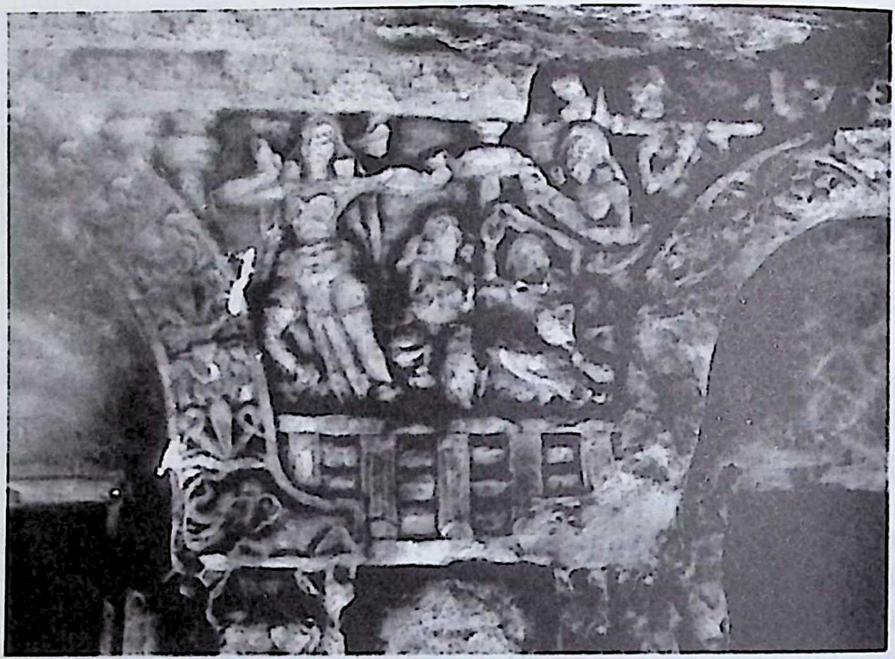

Plate I: Rani Gumpha Cave

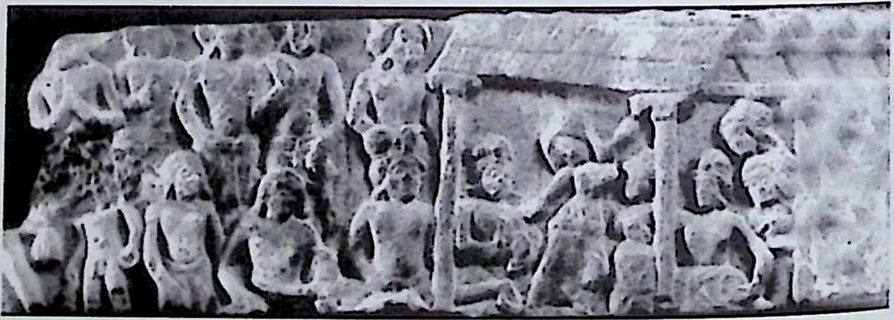

Plate II: Frieze from Mathura

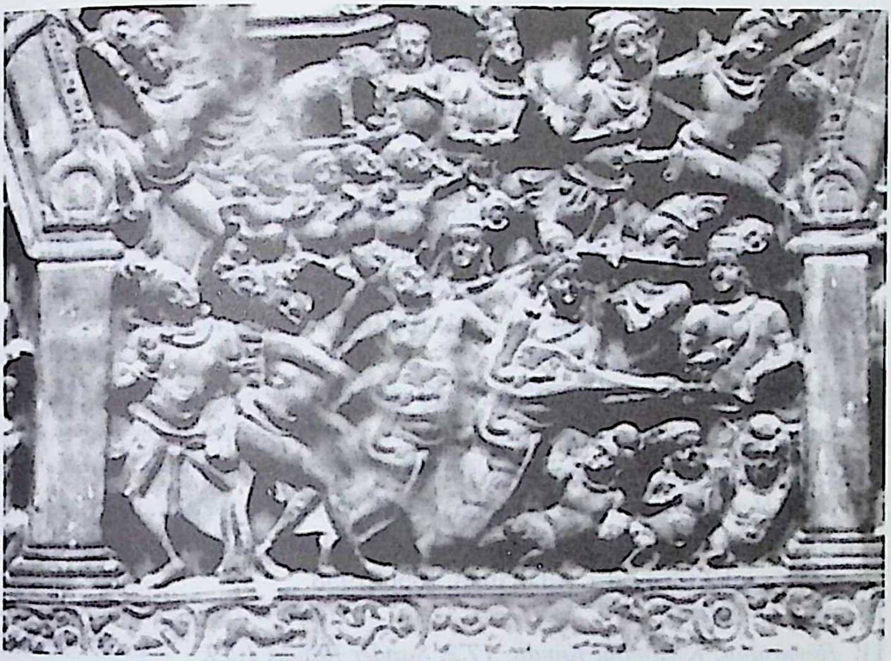

Plate III: Amravati Frieze

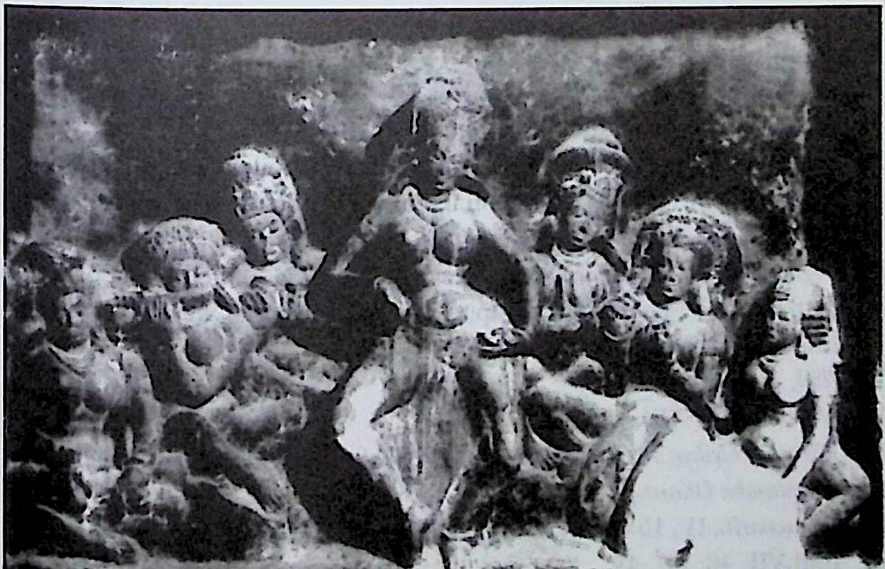

Plate IV: Aurangabad Cave No. 7

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The Integral Relation Between Religion and Morality in the Bhakti Tradition of Medieval India: Its Relevance in Today's World

I

Perhaps the most crucial feature of the later half of twentieth century was constant violent conflict between various religion-based communities globally, leading to Huntington's theory of The Clash of Civilizations. India could have become a beacon light to the world had she adhered to her traditional values of tolerance of and goodwill towards different religions and cultures. With erosion of her own ideals and values from nineteenth century onwards, there was finally culmination in the partition of the subcontinent and the accompanying holocaust, and various subsequent communal riots. This paper tries to focus on the positive and profounder elements of the Bhakti tradition, of the medieval period, as I believe that they could provide a welcome corrective to many malices of modern society. However, the intention of the paper is not to argue for a theistic metaphysics presupposed in the Bhakti tradition, or assert that the devotional form of religion is the only true one.

Vedic tradition had long upheld that all creation is in essence the same Absolute, call it either *Atman* or *Brahman.*[1] But the Vedic–Dharmasastric Aryans failed to understand that you cannot assert one *Atman-Brahman* in every living being[2] and at the same time make drastic distinctions between them. *Manu Smrti* is a classic example of this contradiction.[3] But even more shocking example is provided by Samkara who is the greatest exponent of Advaita Vedanta, according to which there is nothing different from *Brahman.* If so, there is left no basis for any distinctions between one human being and another,[4] and yet Samkara endorses cruel punishments to *sudras* who happen to listen to Vedas, prescribed by the *Gautama Dharma Sutra.*[5] The Vedic–Dharmasastric tradition further advocated the need of elaborate rituals to achieve one's religious goals, and even endorsed violence in rituals.

II

II.1. It is here that the Bhakti tradition provided a corrective to the greatest shortcoming of the Aryan-Hindu religion by rejecting all caste and community distinctions. The total rejection of all man-made distinctions is one of the greatest contributions of the Bhakti tradition. Its second contribution is the equal rejection of the relevance of elaborate rituals for one's religio-spiritual goal. Its two other contributions deal with the conception and meaning of true religion. Thirdly, according to all *bhakta* saints, selfless *bhakti* or devotion to God is the perfect means of God realization, rather than *jnana* and *karma* (rituals), which were so far regarded as the true means of God realization. Fourthly, this *bhakti* necessarily means purity of heart and selflessness, or an ethico-spiritual attitude of mind and heart. This involves sympathy and love for all other creatures. Its conception of both the religious goal and its way (*marga*) was a spiritual and ethical one.

Though I have called the Bhakti tradition as medieval, in fact it started in the first centuries of the Christian era itself. The important texts of Hindu devotional theism are the *Svetasvatara Upanisad, Bhagvadgita, Visnu Purana, Bhagavat Purana,* and the *Bhakti Sutras* of Narada and Sandilya. In addition there is a vast literature both in Tamil and Sanskrit known as Agamas. Significantly Bhakti tradition has had its beginning in the South, and was divided at first between Vaisnava and Saiva Bhakti cults; the followers of the two cults were known as Alvars and Nayanars respectively (approximately forth to eighth centuries). From the South the wave of *bhakti* travelled to western India giving rise to great bhakta saints of Maharashtra, such as Jnaneshwara (thirteenth century). Namadeva and Tukaram (fourteenth-fifteenth centuries), and from there it spread to the northern and finally to the eastern India, where it thrived through the devotional songs of Kabir (fifteenth century), Mira, Surdas (sixteenth century), Tulsidas (sixteenth-seventeenth centuries), Nanak (fifteenth-sixteenth centuries), and Raidas (fifteenth century) in the North, Chaitanya (sixteenth century) and Shankara deva (sixteenth century) in the East.

The greatest characteristic, as well as contribution of the Bhakti movement was the declaration that '*jat pat puchhe nahin koi; Hari ko bhaje so Hari ka hoi.*' (Caste has no relevance in the field of *bhakti* as whosoever is devoted to God becomes His very own-Raidas) One of the most important reasons for the rise and immense popularity of the Bhakti movement through the length and breadth of India was the harsh fact that the masses and women of all classes were left out without any religion by the Brahmanas following either the *jnana marga* (Vedanta) or the way of *karma kanda* (Mimamsa and Dharmasastras). The doctrine of *adhikara bheda* was developed in order to support the exclusion of the masses and women from what was claimed to be religion or way to *moksa.* According to it, only that religion (*marga*) was to be followed which was in accordance with the inclinations and capacities of the persons concerned. It was further asserted that neither the *sudras* nor the women have the capacity for the religion being advocated by the two schools of Vedic Dharma. Left to themselves the masses and women indulged in petty rituals which often verged on animism. Later on Puranas had tried to offer some religion to the masses, but the religion as conceived by the Puranas was too externalistic and devoid of any spiritual solace. It rather confirmed to the general point of view that they were incapable of profounder religion

Significantly a majority of *bhakta* saints hailed from the so-called lower classes/ castes. Namadeva was a tailor; Tukaram a farmer, Sena a barber, Raidas a cobbler, Sadna a butcher, and Kabir and Raskhan Muslims. These caste names may not mean anything to an outsider but for the Hindu society, organized on the basis of caste hierarchy, they are most significant, especially as butcher and Muslims are outside the caste hierarchy and hence untouchables. There were women saints also, one of them being a prostitute. These saints, however, lived, sang and preached within the Hindu society; and most important, they were revered for their *bhakti* and saintliness. They challenged the inherent biases of the then Hindus and made them realize that God's devotion is the magic stone that transforms a person, making him/her worthy of reverence irrespective of any caste and community distinctions and limitations.

These saints declared that all living beings are sanctified by the presence of the Supreme Being in their hearts, thus leaving no scope for distinctions between them. They seem to have been inspired by the Vedantic vision of the immanence of, even basic identity with, the Supreme Being. The Lord says in the *Bhagvadgita*:

> He who sees Me everywhere and sees all in Me, I am not lost to him, nor is he lost to Me...
> The Self (Atman) abiding in all being, and all beings abiding in the Self—sees he who ... sees the same everywhere.[6]

Shandilya says,

> All persons, down to the lowest born, have equal right to follow the path of devotion. They are filled with the presence of God.[7]

The Lord in the *Bhagavat Purana* says:

> *Isvara* is present in the hearts of all beings. Thinking in this way, one should bow down to all creatures.[8]

Not only all humans, irrespective of caste, community or sex, are entitled to pracise *bhakti*, such persons, even if they are *candala* (lowest of castes) become worthy of reverence by others. According to the *Viṣnu Purana*, since the Divine Being resides in the hearts of all beings, He is the object of all sacrifices, worship and even violence, so that if one hurts others, one, in fact, hurts God himself.[9] The *Bhagvat Purana* repeatedly declares that even a person born in the 'lowest' caste (*wapaca*) becomes more worthy of reverence if he dedicates himself fully to the lord than a Brahman who does not worship God.[10] Such assertions could have revolutionised the Hindu society, and redeemed it from the curse of caste hierarchy and untouchability. But nothing like this happened, either because the roots of caste and ritualistic discrimination against the so-called lower castes were too deep and strong, or the *bhakta* saints themselves were no social reformers and gave these views mostly as normative assertions.

Kabir was an exception. He was also no social reformer but his conviction of one Rama dwelling in every heart was so strong that he just could not accept any distinctions between man and man. It was also perhaps because he had a prophetic vein in him which made him assert his convictions strongly and passionately. Kabir is the greatest exponent of this vision of absolute equality of all human beings, rather of all living beings in medieval India. He repeatedly tells us that no one is superior or inferior; in God's kingdom all are the same. All sense of superiority due to religion or caste is false:

> The Lord (Sahib) is in you, the Lord is in me, as life in every seed
> O servant, put false pride away, and seek Him within you.[11]

In a most beautiful song Kabir's Rama tells him '*Mo ko kahan dhundhe re bande, main to tere pas hun*' (Where dost thou seek me, O creature? I am so near to you, i.e. in your heart.)[12] If the Lord is in all, there is no question of our relative superiority or inferiority. All are equal, even as Lord's presence is equal in them. This equality of all humans is often presented in a negative way, that is, by rejecting all possible bases of distinction between man and man. In a semi-prophetic vein he repeatedly affirms that all distinctions of religious creeds are mere conventions, since God is one and all human beings are basically the same. Kabir is equally vehement in his rejection of all caste distinctions. He puts forth these ideas in a more forceful manner than any other religious leader. To quote him:

Numskull! you have missed the point.
It is one skin and bone,... one blood and one meat.
Who is Brahmana, who is Sudra?....
Kabir says, plunge into Ram .
There is no Hindu, no Turk.[13]

And,

There is one world with one air and one water.
All human beings belong to one race .
They are all pots made of the same clay .
They all have one Creator....
Thou art present in every body,
And it is Thou who takes many forms .
All beings are born of one Glory (*Nur*),
Who is a Brahman, who is sudra?[14]

The God of Sankardeva tells him:

I, Hari, live broadcast in all creatures;
Take them all as Visnu and respect them too.
He alone is learned and knows everything.
Who has no discrimination between a Brahmana and a Candala,
Who has the same regard for the benevolent and the thief,
Who has the same understanding for the vile and the good.
Knowing the dog, jackal and the donkey possess the same blissful soul,
Prostrate thyself to all of them.[15]

The uniqueness of this vision of one Divine Being in all consists in the inclusion of animals and all living creatures as having the same Self (*Atman*) as human beings, and rejection of any basis of difference between them. Moreover, the humans and animals are constituted of the same blood, bones and we all share one breath (prana).[16]

This vision is more central in the songs of *Nirguna Bhakti* saints, as it is easier to conceive God's immanence in all if your God is the Absolute. But if you conceive God as a person with attributes with whom the saint wants to have a relation of love or bhakti, then that Divine Being has to be an 'Other' to the devotee, and not identical with him. That is why Surdas never talks of God's immanence. And yet all these saints of *Saguna* tradition were equally aware of an intrinsic affinity with the Supreme which nullifies all distinctions, and affirmed the immanence of God, though in a slightly milder way. Tulsidasa says "O Lord, you are both the God and seeker, the Creator of the entire universe; as well as the omniscient Lord of it. You are present in the entire creation as thread in the cloth, or earth in the pot, or gold in gold ornaments."[17] In the very beginning of *Ramacharita Manas* Tulsidasa declares:

> Knowing all conscious and unconscious beings of the world to be full of Sita and Rama, With folded hands I salute their lotus feet.[18]

Rama tells Hanuman:

> He is my best devotee, O Hanumat, who firmly believes that all beings, both movable and immovable, are forms of the Lord, and he is the servant of them all.[19]

Tulsidas, though an advocate of conservative values, gives beautiful word pictures of Rama embracing Kevata, the low caste boatman, and Rama eating the berries from the hands of Shabri who offers them to Rama after first tasting each of them for their quality. Similarly in the *Mahabharata* Kṛṣna prefers to eat the simple dinner at Vidura, the illegitimate son of a slave woman, rather than eat at Duryodhana's palace. The idea was central here that if a man is religious in the true sense of the term, then he transcends all caste and community distinctions. Of course, this condition was removed in the songs of various other saints of *Nirguna Bhakti* tradition, as we have seen above.

II.2. *Bhakta* saints were equally opposed to the ritualism of both Mimamsakas and popular Puranic religion. The followers of Vedic–Dharmasastric religion put the greatest stress on detailed rituals suggesting that man's ultimate destiny can be secured only by following the details of the prescribed rituals, without any reference to inner faith or purity of heart, and further declaring that the basic motive for undertaking these rituals is always the desire for some personal good. Manu frankly says: "Both the acceptance of Vedas and the performance of Vedic acts are motivated by desire. [....] No act is undertaken by a man without a desire in the world."[20] Given the above premise of desire fulfilment as the goal of all human activities, it was now argued that, any desire could be achieved by appeasing any of the large number of gods through some ritual or the other. Moral considerations became secondary in this approach, at least at the level of popular religion.

Writers of Puranas vied with each other in offering easiest rituals to the masses, marketed with the assurance that it would give them any desired boon, even *moksa* immediately. The Puranas, were written during the same period which saw the rise and spread of the Bhakti movement. But most Puranas, with two exceptions of *Visnu* and *Bhagavat Puranas*, often talk how *moksa* is so easy to achieve for those who are not entitled for either *jnana* or Vedic sacrifices, that is the 'lower' castes and women of all *varnas*, because in Kaliyug (the present age) no hard conditions are required for achieving *moksa*. Then they go on to suggest petty rituals which would lead to *moksa* of all those who perform that ritual, such as lighting an earthen lamp every day in the Kartik month![21] Alternatively, they prescribe equally petty rituals as a means of acquiring whatever one happens to desire, and guarantee heaven after death! There is generally no reference to any moral requirement in most Puranas. Importantly, rituals were simplified immensely in the Puranas, as a result of which these rituals and various dogmatic beliefs promoted in the Puranas became the chief ingredients of popular religion, more so because the Puranas now claimed that their religion was meant for all human beings irrespective of caste and sex. Religion was despiritualized, that is, it had no place for either religio-spiritual aspirations, or moral humanitarian virtues.

The *bhakta* saints undermined, even totally rejected these rituals. Even early Bhakta saints worshipping a *Saguna* God did not indulge in many rituals, while the saints affirming a *Nirguna* God totally denied their relevance. Significantly, idol worship was not very common, at least its elaborate details as prescribed and practised by the followers of certain later sects, such as that of Vallabha, were not yet practised. Starting with the *Bhagvadgita* and *Bhakti Sutras* of Narada and Sandilya to the two theistic Puranas, *Visnu Purana* and *Bhagvat Purana,* almost all texts dealing with *bhakti* or intense devotion to God, decry elaborate rituals and declare that God is pleased if He is offered only flowers and leaves with a pure heart. The Lord says in the *Bhagavat Purana*:

> I am always residing in the heart of every creature as his soul. By disregarding my existence a person would merely waste his time by worshipping my idols.[22]

A certain transcendence or rejection of rituals is inherent in the very conception and practice of religion as selfless love of God, whether conceived as a Beloved or a Master or the very essence of one's being. *Bhakti,* mostly conceived as *prapatti* or unconditional self-surrender to the Lord, leaves no scope for selfish desires. And in as much as rituals were undertaken mostly with some selfish motive, there remains no need and no scope for undertaking rituals. Thus even the saints of *Saguna Bhakti* tradition, while conceiving God as a personal Being, even having a body in His Incarnation, do not mention any need of rituals. Mira and Surdas' *gopis* (milk maids of Vrindavan who loved Krṣna selflessly) are madly in the love of Krṣna, and there is no place for any rituals in their love. Tulsidas practised *das bhakti* (the devotion of a slave to his master), but even in his worship and devotion there is no mention of any rituals which need to be performed in order to get God's grace. The only difference between the saints of *Saguna Brahman* and those who loved the *Nirguna Brahman,* immanent in every heart, is that while the former did not practise any rituals, they did not also bother to condemn them; but the saints of *Nirguna* tradition were prophetic in their style and approach and regarded the hope of realizing God through rituals an affront to the idea of both God and *bhakti.*

Kabir, again, is most prominent in his condemnation of rituals as a means to God-realization. He declares that if one could get Hari by worshipping stones (idols), then he is willing to worship a mountain (the bigger the better!). Alternatively, it would be better to worship the grinding stone in the home as every one eats the flour ground in it![23] Actually Kabir was irritated at every possible ritual as it negates the worth of internal faith. He criticizes the mullah's cry for prayer (*ajan*), telling him that he seems to think that God is deaf whereas He can hear the sound of bells tied round the feet of ants.[24] Those who undertake externalistic rituals of any kind do not remember that God is present in every heart. In fact, Kabir's rejection of rituals is so thorough that he rejects even the practice of visiting the mosques and temples:

> Does Khuda lives in a mosque?
> Then who lives everywhere?
> Is Rama in idols and holy grounds?
> Have you looked and found Him there?
> Search in the heart, in the heart alone.
> There live Ram and Karim.[25]

He is also critical of the Hindu practice of untouchability and excessive emphasis on ritualistic purity. He tells the *Brahmanas* obsessed with purity that the water they are drinking is one in which the blood of past generations is mixed, and so on. Above all Kabir is critical of animal sacrifices, practised both by Hindus and Muslims, as also meat eating, as they are all creations of God.

> Here prayer, there blood
> Fast all day, kill cow at night,
> Does that please God?[26]

Significantly, all Kabir's admonitions, though presented in a semi-prophetic language, are based on rational grounds. Thus, his rejection of the relevance of all distinctions between man and man is based on his understanding of human biology. Much in advance of his age and times he also declares—rightly that the bodies of humans and animals are made of the same material. Here is a message of universal compassion based on the (scientific) fact of the essential affinity among all living beings.[27]

Guru Nanak and Guru Teg Bahadur similarly argued against all rituals and of course against all caste and community distinctions. In the North-east Sankara Deva practised and popularised pure devotion to the Lord free of any ritualistic encumberance. Sankara Deva established and spread the institutions called *Nam Ghars*, or halls where all devotees of God assemble and sing bhajans and kirtans but there is no idol to be worshipped. (Sometimes the *Bhagvat Purana* is kept at the altar like the *Granth Saheb*). The absence of idols at the place of worship points to the need of practising pure selfless *bhakti* in the heart.

II.3. This brings us to the conception and practice of *bhakti*. *Bhakti* or devotion was unanimously accepted as the only means of God-realization. The latter, naturally, was conceived differently in the two main schools of devotional theism—those advocating the worship of and devotion to the *Saguna Brahman*, and those conceiving and loving the Supreme as *Nirguna*. The devotion was conceived differently as devotion of a slave to his Master, or the devotion of a lover to his/her Beloved, which, in turn, could be the passionate love of a Mira or a *gopi*, or the self-negating love of a Kabir or Dadu. But it was unanimously decided that not *jnana*, not *karma* or rituals but devotion of a pure heart alone brings us nearer to the Supreme. The gopis of Surdas make fun of Uddhava who was sent by Lord Krṣna to teach them the truth of the attributeless Absolute. They tell him that they love the person of Krṣna, and their love is far better and higher then his dry message of *jnana*, which diatribe ultimately converts Uddhava to the creed of devotion.[28]

This *bhakti* has two salient points—first, it is totally monotheistic. Monotheism was rather unknown in Indian thought which mainly consisted of either the polytheism of Vedas and Puranas, or strict monism of Vedanta, and even atheism of various sects. What was the reason of the development of the theistic devotionalism within

Hinduism? It could well have been the influence of the strict monotheism of Islam. That influence cannot be rejected off hand, but it could not have generated the monotheistic devotionalism of the Tamil saints of early centuries of the Christian era, or the slightly later tradition of *dasa bhakti* of the saints of Karnataka, or even the intense mystical devotion of the saints of Maharashtra. It is only in the North that the influence of Islam can be discerned, and that too only upon the saints of *Nirguna Bhakti* cult. The monotheism of Bhakti cults is typically Vedantic in its flavour. Each saint poet believes and loves his/her own conception of the Divine, regards Him as the Supreme Reality, but also believes that there can be different conceptions of the self—same Realty, and they would be equally true. This is the classical idea of *Ista devata.* Thus while each saint had his/her own *Ista devata,* mostly Rama or Krṣna, this did not mean going down to popular polytheism. This *Ista devata* is still conceived and loved as the Supreme Divine Being. On the other hand, the saints of *Nirguna Bhakti* sect unequivocally declared that there is not only one Absolute but also He/It can only be the Supreme Being immanent in all hearts. Thus even though the *bhakta* saints were strictly monotheistic, their conception of the Supreme Divine was still Vedantic.

The second tenet of all these *bhakta* saints was that this *bhakti,* in order to be true and effective, must be totally selfless. This was the conception of *prapatti* advocated by Ramanuja. It was also the *bhakti* or *prema* experienced and described by Mira, *gopis* of Surdas and the hankering of the soul for God of a Kabir. Kabir explains that only one can live in the subject's consciousness—either the ego or God: '*Jab main tha tab Hari nahin, ab Hari hain main nahin*' (When I was there then Hari was not anywhere, now Hari is there then I am not there).[29] Kabir is firmly convinced that one can attain God only if he is ready to give up one's head i.e. ego. Therefore, giving up of all pride and egoism is the first virtue required for attaining devotion to God. According to him, 'the best of all things is a true heart.'[30] Here there is no place of desires for one's little self as there is no self left.

Bhakta saints were not always absorbed in the esoteric vision of unity. When they were in their normal waking consciousness, they were often intensely conscious of their own shortcomings, and talked voluminously of their sinfulness. However, this awareness of one's own sinfulness does not mean anything similar to the Christian conception of the original sin shared by the whole mankind. What they are talking is the sinfulness or unworthiness of their own petty little selves which makes them distant from their Divine Beloved. It is the classical 'creature feeling' described by Rudolf Otto which naturally comes to us when confronted by the Divine Absolute. However, it has no ontological implications and simply an existential feeling of distance or separation from the Divine. Surdas laments: '*Mo sam kaun kutil khal kami? Jin tan diye tahi thukarayo aiso non harami.*' (Who is more of a scoundrel than me? I have forgotten the Lord who has given me this body and am most ungrateful.)[31] Tulsidas, of course, is the greatest saint who has immortalized this creature feeling in his songs of pitiful prayers. He repeatedly sings '*Tu dayalu, din haun; Tu dani haun bhikhari.*' (You are the kind Lord, I am the fallen one. You are the giver [of grace], I am the beggar.)[32] In another song he says '*Ram so baro hai kaun, mo saun kaun choto*' (Who is greater than Ram, and who is more insignificant than me?).[33] Kabir reaches the root of all evil doing and also points out the remedy for the same when he says that he was looking at the evil in others, but when he peeped into his heart, he found that no one was more evil than him.'[34]

II.4. This *bhakti* was conceived and practised in such a way that there was an integral relation between the *bhakti* or religion of these saints and a moral way of life. Though the classical texts give four sources of evil doing, in fact it is the ego, the idea of me and mine that gives rise to other feelings of excessive attachment (*moha*), anger at not getting what one wants (*krodha*), and envy at other's rise (*spraha*), which is also the source of the most common drive of modern life competition. It goes without saying that the ego or the empirical self and its innumerable needs and demands are the root cause of all the evils of the world. This self or ego may be one's personal ego alone, or may encompass the family or community or even the entire country. But in so far as our aim is to fufill the various demands of this ego, we are both cut off from the Divinity and the rest of creation. The latter seen as the 'other' becomes a mere object of the fulfilment of our desires, which perception may well lead to hatred and even violence. In the concept of *bhakti* there is no place for such a bifurcation of the self and the 'other', as instead of these two categories only one Divine Reality is left at the centre of consciousness, and therefore no scope is left for evil doing.

Most *bhakta* saints assert the creatureliness of their selves, as well as an awareness of some essential affinity with the Divine Being. But this perception of affinity or even basic unity with the Absolute (the latter is not so common) does not nullify either the world or the soul. Therefore the accusation of Albert Schweitzer, that since Hinduism denies the reality of the world and the duality of the subject and the object, no morality is possible in its world-view, is very much off the mark.[35] True, morality is not perceived as integral to the conception of *moksa* in Advaita Vedanta, even though it is a preliminary means of the realization of the ultimate truth of Unity, the conceptualization of *bhakti* necessarily involves ethical virtues as an integral part of the *bhakti* itself. It is to be remembered that *bhakti* for these saints is not a mere means of God-realization but is rather the spiritual goal itself. They say that they are not interested in *moksa* as that would destroy the individual consciousness, and thereafter they would not be able to enjoy the experience of *bhakti* to the Lord.

Thus, it was almost for the first time in the history of Hindu religion that morality was given a prominent place in a religious person's life. It is not to say that earlier religious texts and the philosophy of Advaita Vedanta undermined the moral way of life; in fact, in Vedantic Hinduism moralty or righteousness, designated by the term *dharma*, has always been an integral part of what is understood as religion in the West. But the emphases in the three previous religious traditions, the Vedic—Dharmasastric, Vedantic and Puranic had different emphasis and seemed to give a secondary place to morality.

In contrast to the above, all those texts which deal with *bhakti* as the supreme means of God-realization, give great importance to a pure heart and a righteous way of life. The *Bhagvadgita* and other texts of the Bhakti tradition assert that the real bhakti can alone be that of selfless devotion and surrender of all desires and ego to the Lord. It is also to be remembered that unlike Vedanta, or rather Advaita Vedanta, the conception of *bhakti* never required the person practising *bhakti* to give up life in the world. A majority of *bhakta* saints were householders. It was all through assumed that one can and should practise highest kind of devotion while performing one's duties. As to the reality of the world, though Kabir often talks of *maya*, his *maya* is not that of Samkara and does not imply the illusoriness of the world. For the rest of them, especially the saints of *Saguna Bhakti* cult, the world is very much real, the creation of God. Naturally, the *bhakta* is expected to live in the world and practise his/her *bhakti* there in. *Bhakti* does not demand escaping the call of duty but rather a special attitude of mind while performing one's duties, that of unconditional giving up of one's ego of being a doer. The *Bhagvadgita* has given a classical enunciation of the correct frame of mind for an ideal yogi who combines both *jnana, karma* and *bhakti* in himself. Such a yogi is one "who abandons all desires and acts free from longing without any sense of mineness or egotism,"[36] Morality, consisting in the practice of higher moral virtues, is declared by Lord Krṣna as an integral part of true devotion:

> He who has no ill will to any being, who is friendly and compassionate [towards others], free from egoism and self-sense, even-minded in pain and pleasure, and patient [is dear to Me].[37]

But it is the *Bhagavat Purana* that gives the most beautiful expression to this integration between the love of God and the love of man and all living beings. The Lord says therein:

> Knowing Me to be residing in the hearts of all living beings, it naturally behoves every person to serve others with gifts, honour and an equal regard as they would do unto Me...[38]

The same Purana describes true devotees as those who are:

> Humble in nature, devoid of malice, bearing friendly feelings for all creatures, given to service of others, who regard everything with indifference, gentle souls.[39]

It is being taken for granted here that devotion to, or love of, God necessarily both presupposes and results in a gentle and loving nature. A person absorbed in worldly pursuits which may well inspire the sentiments of envy, malice and even cruelty towards others cannot at the same time practice true devotion to the Lord. And if per chance he does practise *bhakti*, he would necessarily be transformed into a gentle and loving person due to the purifying effects of loving devotion to God. Sant Jnaneshwara wrote extensively on the moral virtues of a true devotee of God in his classic commentary on the *Bhagavadgita*, called *Jnaneshwari*. He tells how a devotee is *ahimsa* incarnate; his speech is gentle like the famous southern wind; he is tolerant like the earth; and compassionate and cool like the water. If he raises his hands, it is only to help the afflicted, and so on.[40]

II.5. Thus, these unique saints who lived and sang among the masses gave a religio-moral dimension to their lives. Their basic thrust, as we have seen above, was four fold-rejection of all caste and community distinctions among human beings; the rejection of the relevance of rituals in the search for one's religio-spiritual goal; *bhakti* or selfless devotion to God as the only means to the above goal; and the need for a selfless and moral way of life in order to be near God. It does not mean that they were preaching service of humanity in the modern sense of the term, or even that they were either social reformers, or valued the moral way of life above all. They valued most and practised *bhakti* which often made them other worldly. Still their pure *bhakti* made them saintly, a living model in the society, and their preachings necessarily had a moralistic tone. That is, for them moral virtues were an integral part of devotion to God. Their example and teachings had a salutory impact on the society at large.

Their first impact was on lessening of conflicts between Hindus and Muslims. While there was no conflict between the Hindus and Muslims in the South where the Muslims reached as traders and not as aggressors, in the North the situation was very different, as the Muslims came as aggressors and rulers, and most of their rulers and priests looked down upon the Hindus. The situation could have become volatile had not the *bhakta* saints spread and popularized the message of one God being present in all human beings, by virtue of which all are equal, and no one can claim superiority for himself. Kabir kept shouting:

> No one reads Vedas in the womb
> No Turk was born circumscribed
> Dropped from the belly at birth,
> A man puts on his costumes
> And goes through his acts.[41]

A more interesting and significant fact was that these *bhakta* saints were revered and listened to by both Hindus and Muslims. Even though Kabir was constantly abusing both for their malpractises, both claimed him as their own. The legendary quarrel between Hindus and Muslims over the right to Kabir's last rites brings out the fact that he was equally revered by the two communities. Add to this the fact that several Muslims joined the Bhakti movement, such as Raskhan, Rajjab and many more. If the two religious communities lived not only peacefully but even harmoniously, sharing each other's lives and reverring each other's saints, the credit goes to the bhakta saints, as also the sufi saints.

Another related and no less significant contribution of *bhakta* saints was the undermining of caste distinctions. True, those distinctions remained, but two things happened- First, it was firmly established that true devotees of God aquire a saintliness which goes beyond all caste distinctions. As a large number of *bhakta* saints came from the so-called lower castes, and as they were equally revered by all others, the caste distinctions somehow lost their centrality in the Hindu society. They might have still persisted in the larger society because the vested interests of the 'upper castes' ensured that the caste hierarchy continues, but the the distances between the 'lower' and 'upper' castes would definitely have decreased. How could the upper caste come and sit near the *bhakta* saints and listen to their devotional songs unless they acknowledged that in some way those saints hailing from 'lower' castes were superior to them?

Their second contribution was undermining the importance of external rituals as integral to religion. The *bhakta* saints, as we have seen above, were contemporary to the writers of Puranas. And the latter emphasized innumerable dogmas and petty rituals. Most of the Puranas, seen in isolation, represent a state of religion and culture which are on decline, in which the spiritual core is replaced by some petty formalism.

In contrast *bhaka* saints affirmed and sincere selfless devotion or bhakti to God as the essence of true religion, and this is their third contribution. Their fourth contribution towards the development of a new rejuvenated Hinduism lies in their emphatic assertion that *bhakti* requires purity of heart, selflessness and moral virtues. Thus the bond between pure religion and morality was firmly established and strengthened by the saintly character of the devotee saints.

II.6. I must acknowledge here that the above version of the Bhakti tradition is one-sided. The Bhakti tradition is not exhausted by the few saints that we have discussed above. There were others who were not as spiritual-minded as the saints discussed above. The *bhakti* phenomenon was both a tradition and a movement. As a tradition it more or less transformed the Hindu religion and culture and gave birth to today's Hinduism. It was also a movement in the sense that it arose among the masses and spread through the length and breadth of India, in some way transforming the lowly and the forelorn, giving them succour and certain dignity. It was a statement by the common man that God does not belong to the 'upper' castes and the privileged alone.

However, a movement does not, cannot sustain itself at the same pitch indefinitely. Considered as a movement, the Bhakti tradition persisted in its full glory and intensity for more than a millennium.

It started in Tamil Nadu in approximately fourth century, continued there till seventh century, then continued in Karnataka as the *Das Bhakti* tradition, and finally tapered off. It then arose in Maharashtra and continued there till almost the sixteenth century. Meanwhile it spread to the Gangetic valley, reaching as far as Assam. It continued as a mass movement-tradition throughout the medieval period but gradually became weaker in its appeal and spiritual content. We can generally say that it continued in its pristine purity till the sixteenth century, and Tulsidas was the last great poet-saint of the Bhakti tradition. It continued but became encumbered with some accretions which changed its natural religio-spiritual thrust.

Gradually it became stagnant and formal losing its earlier stress on inner purity and faith. A negative aspect of the later Bhakti tradition was the popularization of certain narrow conceptions of God by the followers of Krṣna cult of *Saguna Bhakti* tradition. I am not referring to the love of Radha and Krṣna which was supposed to symbolize the constant yearning of the soul for God which is rarely fulfilled. But there were details of Krṣna cult which promoted dogmatism without encouraging any true religio-spiritual feeling of *bhakti.* The same sub-sect of Vaisnavism, that of Vallabha, started elaborate rituals related to the worship of the idols of Krṣna and Radha. The rituals gradually became so elaborate that the entire religion of the followers was exhausted by them. The whole schedule and the conceptualization of the Supreme Being as if He were confined to the idols seems to distort the very ideas of both the Divine and the true devotion to Him.

Another negative impact of the later developments of the Bhakti tradition was the reintroduction of caste distinctions in a big way. Not only Muslims but all sudras were prohibited from entry into temples. The demands of ritualistic purity in the worship of idols created a new priestly class of *goswamis* in Mathura and Vrindavan, as also elsewhere. God became equally inaccessible to the masses as He was before the advent of Bhakti tradition. Finally, since true devotion consisted in a literal following of the prescribed rituals of idol worship with no emphasis on inner devotion of the heart, there remained no need for the practice of moral virtues.

III

The relevance of the Bhakti tradition to the present times lies in its ideology and moral orientation. We have seen above that all *bhakta* saints opposed caste distinctions. Though often this opposition was confined to human beings' right to practise devotion to God, they at the same time affirmed an innate dignity of man, equality of all human beings and the purifying effect of God's devotion which converts a 'low' caste into a venerable saint. There was a humaneness in them which made them stand apart from all their contemporaries. We miss those humane qualities in today's society except in Mahatma Gandhi.

And yet in spite of the condemnation of various man made distinctions among men, who were created same by God, by these saints, and later by various Hindu ideologues as Dayananda Saraswati and Mahatma Gandhi, these distinctions are continuing in Indian society, as they are in the larger world. The failure of Swami Dayananda and Mahatma Gandhi lay in the fact that though they rejected caste distinctions, they would not deny distinctions based on religions. While Dayananda even emphasized these distinctions as if they were ultimate, Gandhi having accepted them tried to establish harmonious relations between various religious communities.[42] In sharp contrast, as we have seen above, the *bhakta* saints rejected all such distinctions. Guru Nanak declared '*Na koi Hindu na Musalman*' (There is no distinction here between Hindu and Muslim). And Kabir said '*Ek Nur se sab jag upaja, ko bhale ko gande*' (The entire creation is born of one Divine glory; how, then, can we make a distinction between good and bad). They refused to acknowledge any distinctions between man and man as relevant not only in man's right to worship God but also in men's dealings with each other. Kabir pointed out how men worship God giving Him different names and then they go and kill each other, thus rejecting the very idea of Rama or God residing in every heart. He declared repeatedly:

> It is one, one in every body.
> How did you make it two?

Every man and woman born,
They are all Your forms, says Kabir.[43]

In modern times it is regarded as a sign of being progressive if we affirm various irrelevant distinctions between man and man, and declare some as majority, others as minority, or some as dalits and others as forward. While Nanak and Kabir could rise above all such man-made distinctions, we of modern age think that emphasizing them is the way of being progressive and secular. True, none of these saints were social reformers in the modern sense of the term, and yet they provided us with a criterion which can be the firm basis of all furure reforms. The above is not a plea for uniformity, nor an effort to neglect the underprivileged groups, but simply an affirmation that the dignity, humanity and equality of all persons must be the basis for all our ideologies and activities.

Second, when the entire humanity was shrouded in the darkness of ignorance and superstition, our *bhakta* saints advocated a rational approach to religion. Though the saints belonging to the *Saguna* cult did not emphasize their rejection of all or most rituals, they did not practise or advocate any rituals either (here we are excluding the later Vallabha sect). However, the saints of *Nirguna Bhakti* tradition were vehemently opposed to all rituals. From Kabir to Nanak and Sankaradeva all of them denied any relevance of rituals. What they wanted to bring home to the people was that religion consists in the response of the heart to the 'Divine', and reducing it to mere rituals is destroying religion itself.

A total sundering of religion and moral norms and values results from this superficial concept of religion now generally being practised. Today's religion/religiosity has achieved a unique sundering of religion and morality. Now religion can be and is being practised without reference to moral values. While all saints of the Bhakti tradition unanimously declared that true devotion can be pursued only with a pure heart, in today's religion there seems to be no place for inner faith, or purity of the heart, far less of moral sentiments or virtues. The virtues of compassion and love for our fellow beings, as also the value of the dignity of humans and their unconditional equality, both because of the Divine's presence in every heart, so much emphasized in the entire Bhakti literature, are absent in today's culture and religion. Perhaps if we could bring in some of the profounder aspects of the religion of the medieval period, it can provide a much needed corrective to the popular religion of the masses and the privileged alike. And of course it would lead to a much more harmonious and conflict free society based on humanitarian values.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Upanisads affirm a worldview according to which one Divine Reality, called alternatively *Atman* and *Brahman*, is both the source and ground of the entire creation and the innermost self of all persons. See *Chandogya Upanisad* III.14.1; *Taittiriya Upanisad* III.1.1.; *Brhidaranyaka Upanisad* II.1.20, III.7.5.ff., IV.4.3 *Mundaka Upanishad* II.2.1–II.2.11 etc.Also see *Bhagvadgita* IV.41–42., VI.29–32.
2. See *Chandogya Upanisad* III.14.1, VI.6.4–VI.8.4, 7; *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* III.7.3 ff. etc.
3. Manu is the most well known advocate of caste distinctions. See *Manu Smrti* (The Sacred Books of the East, volume xxv, *The Laws of Manu*, tr. by G. Buhler, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, reprint 1982) I.93–96, IV.165–169, IX.316–319, XI.127–131, XI.83–84. He also prescribes punishments for identical crimes which progressively increase as the caste of the offender goes down in the hierarchy. IV.165 ff., VIII.315, 417, 359, 372, 413–417. Other Dharmashastras, as those of Apastamba and Gautama, speak exactly the same language.

   Interestingly, having advocated extremely unequal treatment of different persons according to their respective *varnas*, Manu then goes on to talk of one Self in all. See *ibid.* VIII.84–85, XII.118, 125.
4. Samkara concludes from his basic thesis of one *Atman-Brahman* as the Self of all that this allows no metaphysical basis for distinction between man and man. See *Brahma Sutra Samkara Bhasyà* (tr. by Gambhiranand, Calçutta: Advaita Ahrama, 1965) 'Introduction (*Adhyasa Bhasya*)', and 1.1.4.
5. See *Brahma Sutra Samkara Bhasya* I.3.34–38, wherein he declares that no Śudra has a right to perform Vedic sacrifices, or even to listen to the

Vedas. He goes on to endorse harsh and cruel punishments to the Śudras who dared to do either, prescribed by the authors of various Dharmashastras, such as the *Gautam Dharma Sutra* X. 4–5.

6. *Bhagvadgita* VI.30, 32. (tr. by S. Radhakrishnan, Bombay: Blackie & Son (India), 1977).
7. *Sandilya Bhakti Sutra* 78.
8. *Bhagavat Purana*, book III, ch. 29 (*The Srimad Bhagavatam* 2 volumes, tr. by J.M. Sanyal, Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1973.), vol. 1, p. 265. cf. "Knowing Me to be residing in the hearts of all beings, it naturally behoves every person to serve others with gifts, honour and equal regard as they would unto Me." *Ibid.*, vol. 1, ch. 3, p. 264.
9. *Visnu Purana*, book III, ch. 8 (tr. by H.H. Wilson, Calcutta: Punthi Pustak, 1972). p. 134.
10. *Bhagavat Purana*, book VII., ch.9. vol. 1., p. 656
11. *One Hundred Poems of Kabir*, tr. by Rabindranath Tagore (Madras, Delhi: Macmillan (India), reprint 1985), pp. 82–83.
12. *Ibid*, p. 21.
13. *The Bijak of Kabir*, tr. by Linda Hess and Sukhdev Singh, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1986), p. 67.
14. *Kabir Granthavali*, ed. by, Shyamsundar Das, (Varanasi: Nagri Pracharani Sabha, Vikram samvat 2050), pp. 82–83, writer's transl.
15. Quoted in Maheshwar Neog, *Shankardeva*, New Delhi: National Book Trust, India, 1967, p. 88.
16. "Beast meat and man meat are the same.
    Both have blood that is red, sirÖ.
    For gods and goddesses of clay
    You kill a living beast, sir.
    If your god is real, why can't he go
    And have his feast, sir?" *The Bijak of Kabir*, p. 64.
17. Tulsidas, *Vinay Patrika*, ed. by Yogendra Pratap Singh (Allahabad: Lokabharati Prakashan, reprint, 2002) poems 53, 54, 107 etc. pp. 89–92.
18. *Ramcharita Manas*, ed. by Hanuman Prasad Poddar (Gorakhpur: Gita Press, reprint, 2058 Vikram Samvat) *Bal Kanda* 7, p. 10.
19. *Ibid.*, *Kiskindha Kanda* 3, p. 588.
20. *Manu Smrti* II.1–4.
21. *Analysis of the Puranas*, ed. by H.H. Wilson, (Delhi: Nag Publishers, 1979), p. 55.
22. *Bhagavat Purana*, book III, ch. 29, vol. 1, p. 264.
23. *Kabir Granthavali*, p. 35, writer's transl.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
25. *The Bijak of Kabir*, p. 88.
26. *Ibid.*, pp. 64, 67, 73–74, 114–15.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 74.
28. The *gopis*' dialogue with Uddhava, an emissary of Kṛṣna, called *Bhramara Gita*, is an interesting exposition of the creed of love of a personal God. Therein *gopis* decry devotion to an attributeless Absolute, and their selfless love comes through their arguments. See the discussion of *Bhramara Gita*, the poetry of Surdas by Ramchandra Shukla, in his two works—*Hindi Sahitya ka Itihas* and *Surdas* (both published in Varanasi by Nagri Pracharani Sabha, 2060, 2054 Vikram Samvat) pp. 90 ff., and 119 ff. respectively.
29. *Kabir Granthavali*, p. 12, also *ibid.*, pp. 13, 14.
30. *The Bijak of Kabir*, p. 95.
31. Given in Ramchandra Shukla, *Surdas, op. cit.*, pp. 119 ff.
32. Tulsidas, *Vinay Patrika, op.cit.*, p. 126.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 113.
34. *Kabir Granthavali, op. cit.* p. 67.
35. Albert Schweitzer, *Indian Thought and Its Development* (Bombay:Wilco Publishing House, 1980) pp. 42 ff.
36. *Bhagavadgita* II. 71.
37. *Ibid.*, XI. 13.
38. *Bhagavat Purana*, book III., ch. 29, vol. 1, p. 265.
39. *Ibid.*, book III., ch. 33., vol. 1, p. 278.
40. See R.D. Ranade, *Mysticism in Maharashtra: Indian Mysticism* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1982) wherein he quotes extensively from the writings of Sant Jnaneshwara, pp. 74, 88–89.
41. *The Bijak of Kabir, op. cit.*, p. 79.
42. Mahatma Gandhi was the apostle of peace, ahimsa and communal harmony. But somehow he could not rise above the religious denominations, and always talked in terms of Hindus, Musalmans etc. Perhaps he was a practical man who could not deny the societal distinctions. See, author, "Gandhi's Approach to Hindu Muslim Unity", in *Gandhi Marg*, vol. 26, no. 3, October–December 2004, pp. 305 ff.
43. *The Bijak of Kabir*, p. 74.

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BOOK REVIEWS

R. Balasubramanian (ed.), *The Life-World of the Tamils: Past and Present–I*, New Delhi: Centre for Studies in Civilisations, 2008, pp. lxvi+851, Rs. 2700

This volume is divided into five sections apart from the introductions. Section one deals with the Life-World of the Ancient Tamils. In this section there are two entries on Tolkappiyam and two on Sangam classics, one specifically on women. One essay dealing with didactic poems of the post-Sangam period comes here, though section three is devoted to the themes in the post-Sangam period.

Section two is about the Epics: The Storying of our Lives. It discusses the two epics *Silappadhikaram* and *Manimekalai* and also *Perungadai.* Section three is on Philosophy, Religion, and Mysticism in the post-Sangam Period. It has seven essays on the religion of the Saivas and Vaishnavas.

Section four is on Education, Trade, Commerce and Administration of the ancient and medieval Tamils. It has five essays in all. The essay on Tirukkural is placed here which of course deals with administration, but Dr. Panneerselvam does not restrict himself to the administration according to Tirukkural, but takes the entire worldview of Kural from the modern and post-modern perspectives on hermeneutics and language. It is said to be the summing up of the basic values of the Tamil world and hence it is placed at the end.

Section five has only one chapter on traditional architecture, and no mention is made of other aesthetic contributions of the

Tamils, as one would expect here, for example from the Tolkappiyam (meyppatiyal) and texts of the same period like *Silappadhikaram* (with details on theatre, stage), etc. In a different context under secular knowledge two pages (286–87) are devoted to dance and drama in Manimekalai.

The classification is rather thematically arranged, though some attention is paid to the chronological order. As a result the essays move back and forth, as references are made to the same texts in different contexts befitting the themes, as one discovers the complexity of the themes, as they unfold themselves in due course.

It is not possible here to discuss each of the contributors in detail, but some general observations are made, not as points of criticism, but as pointers for further discussions. First of all, it is striking that a volume is dedicated to the life-world of the Tamils, as the title indicates, taking the Tamils as cultural entity within the series of volumes on the Indian civilization, allotting space for their specific contribution to religion and philosophy. Each of the articles is a study by itself authored by competent scholars. The focus is said to be on philosophy, religion, culture etc. and yet the editor acknowledges the serious omission of the Tirumular in the selective process, since one cannot squeeze several centuries into one volume.

Secondly, the contributions do not happily play on the distinction between the pure Tamil and Sanskrit (or the Arya versus Dravida) components of the Tamil tradition, though the distinction has its own academic validity, which is not sufficiently researched by Indian scholars. Curiously enough the very first essay is on the Vedic traditions in the Sangam age. The implication here is perhaps that the Tamils have contributed to the general culture through both these linguistic channels.

Thirdly, one of the salient features of this publication is that several texts cited in translations are of great help for those who are not familiar with the original source language, especially on questions related to women, Vedic references in Sangam period, Jaina values in *Silappadhikaram*, key verses from Tirukkural, etc. The section on women (pp. 174–210) authored by Dr. Prema

Nandakumar classifies women in the traditional way: woman as home-maker, woman in widowhood, woman as poet, woman as home-breaker, etc. From an expert in this field one would expect a re-interpretation of the portrayal of women from the post-modern perspective, not simply what is said, but what is not said in the texts. For example, women as "home-breakers" are usually called the "*parattaiyar*", courtesan, common woman, etc. This title was attributed to them, as they were abused by the male society. But they were primarily the talented culture-bearers and guardians of the arts as we know from the Sangam literature. This needs to be emphasized. The 64 arts are not enumerated in the Tamil sources, as in the *Kamasutra* of Vatsyayana, but these arts are pointed out in different contexts both in *Silappadhikaram* and *Manimekalai* and by the commentator Atiyarkku Nallar, while referring to the women conversant with these skills.

Fourthly, it would have been helpful, if the bibliography had included also the contributions made by the other scholars to the Tamil world by way of translations of the Tamil works into European languages, or study of the Tamil texts, etc. They are done obviously with different perspectives but they do bring in further discussion into the Tamil world. For example, A.K. Ramanujan's translation of the Alwar hymns (Hymns for the Drowning, 1981) and other classical Sangam poetry (The Interior Landscape, 1967), Kamil Zvelebil's work on Siddhars and his Tamil Literature are mentioned in this volume, but he has several significant publications including the Lexicon of Tamil Literature (1995); The State in Indian Tradition by Hartmut Scharfe (E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1989) refers to several Tamil textual sources for state administration.

Tirukkural is discussed at length (pp. 731–773) in a scholarly way within a single article. References to *Tirukkural* occur in several essays besides a brief discussion on didactic poetry (pp. 216–220). One has to admit that it is not possible to meet the expectations of every reader. A few more points are added as corollary to this presentation with different perspectives. Granting its universal appeal, one cannot provide an a-historical status to it. It arose certainly out of a particular historical context and tradition and scholars need not shy away from locating the author of the text within a specific Indian system of thought which provides such a vision of thought. Karl Graul who translated it into German in 1856 (there was already one in 1800 by Caemmerer) claims with several arguments that it is a Jaina text and sees the three chapters of *Tirukkural—aram, porul, inbam—* corresponding to the three Lutheran hierarchies of Church, State and Family, which is not a far-fetched interpretation. The difference between *Arthasastra* and *Tirukkural*, as admitted in this essay here, is not merely due to the then prevailing political climate, but also due to different value system. From this angle some scholars like Klimkeit detect the critical tone of the *Tirukkural* on religion in several verses. One such example reads as follows: "If it is destined that some have to eke out their living by begging, let the Creator himself go about begging and perish" (1062).

In fact one of the characteristics of the Tamil tradition is marked by "protest" against imposed values from outside like Sanskritisation. The Siddhars are known to be loud critics of caste and other traditionally accepted values and the chapter on siddhars in this volume seems to play down this aspect casually mentioning this at the conclusion. This dimension is prevalent not merely in the Siddhar tradition but also in the Saiva poet-saints like Appar, in Acaryahrdayam of Alakiya Manavalamamuni, Swami Ramalinga and others. In fact there is an excellent study by Hans-Joachim Klimkeit on the autochthonous elements for the anti-religious movements in the modern South India (1971). In this work the Dravidian protest movement of the Tamil tradition is traced back to the different worldview of the Tamils, the Tamil ethics, image of the human being and understanding of the concept of the world, etc. as found in the values of *Tirukkural* and other works on Tamil ethics.

This point gains importance, since several later developments of the Tamil tradition which is planned by the editors for the second volume, cannot be explained without reference to the ancient classics. The later movements for example of the bhaktas of God Murugan have to go back to Tirumurugarruppatai and also the Saiva

Agamas. In fact a recent publication by Andreas Nehring, Orientalism and Mission (2003) claims that the Christian missionaries have contributed by their translations of the Tamil works to the awakening of the consciousness of the Tamils for Dravidian values as against the Sanskrit traditions. In support of this, the statement of the Nallaswami Pillai is quoted from *Siddhanta Deepika* XI, 7. July, 1910.

Are there specific values upheld by the Tamil tradition prior to their encounter with other traditions? How did the Tamil Bhakti movement for instance integrate its specific contributions with the Jaina and Buddhist values prevalent then in the South? What kind of worldview emerged out of this? These are questions that need to be addressed along with the exposition of the hymns of the bhakti poets. It only means that various factors played a role in the process of their interaction, which enabled their growth and self-understanding. This volume invites further discussion on the construction of history of the people, on the principles of interpreting the texts of their literature and several monuments of cultural significance.

The authors are attempting a difficult task of writing the history of the Tamils. Several literary and inscriptional narratives need interpretation which is not easy. While talking about the five-fold division of the land in the Tamil literature, the climatic condition of the Tamil region is a factor to be considered, which shapes also the Tamil temperament and taste. The Western ghats separate the Tamil landscape drastically. As one historian puts it, what geography had so obligingly joined together, hydrography put as under (cf. John Keay). Secondly, in writing Indian history it is commonly assumed that religion and culture often outdid armies and administration in influencing the course of events. As the political record is deemed deficient, one has to balance the role of artifacts and literature of religious nature in determining the life-world of the Tamils. That is why the remark of D.D. Kosambi is valuable, namely, for the interpretation of the Indian history the main qualification was a willingness to cover the ground on food, that is, "the field work."

The above remarks are in a way meant to create a critical interest among the readers and the forthcoming second volume is awaited to gain a complete picture of the life-world of the Tamils. An attempt of this kind is praiseworthy and the editor and all the contributors deserve an appreciative scrutiny.

ANAND AMALADASS

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Rajendra Prasad (ed.), *A Historical-Developmental Study of Classical Indian Philosophy of Morals*, New Delhi: Centre for Studies in Civilizations and Concept Publishing Company, 2009, pp. xxv + 562, Rs. 1800

The book under review is Volume XII Part 2 of the Sub Project entitled 'Consciousness, Science, Society, Value and Yoga (CONSSAVY)' of Project of History of Indian Science, Philosophy and Culture [PHISPC] under the General Editorship of Professor D.P. Chattopadhyaya. In the post-independent India, this is for the first time that an organisation such as PHISPC was constituted to collect, compile, arrange and present Indian philosophy, science and culture by Indian authors from indigenous and interdisciplinary approach. PHISPC and CONSSAVY have organized several seminars, conferences and symposiums, have published several volumes under the project, in a sentence, they have produced result which is impossible to ignore. The book under review is another illustration in the same direction. It is a product of hard work and ability. There are as many as twenty seven contributors in the present volume dealing with different areas of the philosophy of morals in classical India besides the Editor of the volume and the General Editor of the Project.

The range of moral and philosophical theorizing in this volume is extraordinary. It deals with most of the themes developed by the Vedic seers and Upanishadic sages, including the Epics like *Ramayana* and *Gita*, *Smritis* and *Puranas*, the religious sentiments expressed in Jainism and Buddhism. In addition, the volume has tried to raise historiographic problems concerning Indian ethics and has sought to achieve a thoroughgoing synthesis from historical point of view. It is not easy to assess the contributions of the volume whose professional competence extends from Vedas and Upanishads to *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* and from both these to the *Dharmashastras*, Kautilya, Jain, Buddhist, Nyaya-Vaisesika, Sankhya-Yoga, Mimamsa, Advaita Vedanta, Visistadvaita, Bhakti movement, to the sociology of knowledge, by way of the more recondite sources of Indian spiritual heritage. Moral laws thus derived are applied to the study of Fine Arts, Medical ethics, philosophy of nature—organic and inorganic, in depth and breadth alike. Finally there is an attempt to develop interaction between Indian ethics, Christian ethics and Islamic ethics on the one hand and tribal ethics on the other. There is no corner-cutting, no facile evasion of difficulties or squires enunciation of conclusions unsupported by research: whether the contributors are furṇishing materialistc ethics, dissecting the historicist approaches, delving into the medieval *Bhakti* movement, or bringing Indian ethics up to date, there is always the same uncanny mastery of the sources, joined to an enviable talent for clarifying intricate logical puzzles. Besides the rich notes and references at the end of each paper, each chapter is included with intense bibliography for further reading.

D.P. Chattopadhyaya, in General Introduction, has outlined in clear terms the objectives of the Project, the problematic areas in the cultural and civilizational aspects and the ways and means of projecting those areas. He has put special emphasis on the tricky and fuzzy, as also the misleading overflow of some ideas from one period to another, aspects of the periodization of history, if pressed beyond a point.

Rajendra Prasad, 'On Historiography of Classical Indian Ethics', expresses apprehensions regarding systematization of Indian philosophy of morals but there is no dearth of ethical ideas and ideals in the texts. He tries to provide *objective* and practicalistic perspective to organize those ethical concepts with the aim of making those values relevant in the present-day context. This, however, does not mean that he is advocating presentism—an untenable accusation—and he has cited several examples to substantiate his position.

P.K. Mohapatra, in 'Survey of Modern Writings on Classical Indian Ethics: Methodological Hints for Appraising as Ethics', has taken into account the views of Hiriyanna, McKenzie, Dasgupta, P.V. Kane, Hopkins, Crawford, Radhakrishnan, S.K. Maitra and A.B. Keith. He has displayed three distinctive attributes of Indian mind, namely, Universality, Metaphysicality and Negativity. He places *dharma* within these attitudes and proposes a critique of *svadharma* as *svabhavaja*. He has also furnished a comprehensive analysis of *karma* and *niskama karma*.

Satya Prakash Singh, in 'Ethics in the Veda', regards *atman* as the basis of Vedic ethics. On this basis he goes into the details of *rta* and *dharma*, Gods and Goddesses, ethics of human relationship, marital ethics, economic and environmental ethics.

C. Ramanathan discusses 'Ethics in the *Ramayana*' in terms of three values—*dharma, artha* and *kama*. He develops the ethics of promise-keeping, of alliance, killing without enemity, virtues of devotion and loyalty, emotion and depression, war and surrender, truth and fatalism along with an attempt to justify the two unfair events that happened with Sita.

C. Ramanathan also discusses 'Ethics in the *Mahabharata*' with the contention that all the *purusharthas* are wholly treated in it, but special emphasis is to be given on *dharma*—as right conduct, as *ahimsa*, as truth, as *tyaga*, as *ksama*, and so on. The author has gone into the details of the role and significance of *dharma*, categories of *dharma*, Yudhisthira as the symbol of *dharma*, Krsna's approach to *dharma*. On this basis there is an attempt to evaluate the ethics of war and loyalty. The *karma* aspect has been discussed with comparative brevity.

Rajendra Prasad, in 'Ethics in the *Gita:* An Analytical Study', analyses the place of the *Gita* in Indian ethical corpus, theoretical fallout of treating *Gita* as a divine document, general virtue (*samanyadharma*), caste virtue (*varnadharma*), metaphysics of the self, metaphysical determinism (fatalism), desireless action and exemption from moral guilt. Krishna Datta, in 'Ethics in Basic

Dharmasastras' develops the sources of ethical knowledge, types of *dharmas* or obligations, *asrama dharma, Rajadharma* and *prayascita.*

P.R. Bhat in 'Ethics in Kautilya's Works' places Kautilya in the historical context and discusses issues concerning the State and the virtuous king, the sovereign State, foreign policy, internal administration, *dandaniti,* war ethics, wealth and charity.

Bijayananda Kar in 'Ethics in Classical Indian Materialistic Philosophy' brings out materialism in the Vedic and the Upanishadic period, post-Upanishadic period, the epics, *smritis* and *Puranas,* along with the scholars associated with materialistic thoughts in India.

Pradeep Gokhale in 'Ethics in Jain Philosophical Literature: The Doctrine of *Ahimsa*' discusses Jain theory of right conduct, *jiva* and *karmic* bondage/liberation, the three jewels, *ahimsa* as great and small vow, an intrinsic value, self and the other, paradoxes of *ahimsa,* the role of reason and faith, *anekant, naya* and *syat, scientific and religious* criteria of justification of *ahimsa,* self-torture, etc.

Hari Shankar Prasad in 'Ethics in Buddhist Philosophical Literature' discusses comprehensive ethical programme from instinctive self to the spiritual self through the stages of egoistic, family, social, humanity, environmental and cosmic self. On the basis of highest moral good, i.e. *nibban,* he develops moral rules and ideals, caste morality vs. value morality, etc.

N. Veezhinathan in 'Ethics in Nyaya-Vaisesika School' expounds the final goal of life, i.e. liberation, means to attain liberation, string of action, moral discipline and duties.

N. Veezhinathan in 'Ethics in Sankhya-Yoga School' analyses the method of attaining the highest value by the eight fold discipline as claimed by Patanjali.

D. Prahlada Char in '*Mimamsa* Ethics' furnishes a brief introduction of Indian ethics and places *purva mimamsa sastra* in the context. He analyses *Dharma,* classification of injunctions, *vidhi, niyoga,* god and salvation as absence of pleasure and pain. He is of the opinion that except Vedanta school, all other schools are secular and that Advaita Vedanta and Vijnanavad Buddhism do not regard the reality of the world so morality is irrelevant for them.

R. Balasubramanian in 'Ethics in the Upanishadic and Advaitic Philosophy' develops the *vyavaharika* and the ethical sphere, advaita theory of human rights, *sanatana dharma, parmarthika* and *vyavaharika* perspectives of *dharma,* duty, moral and spiritual discipline and the value system of advaita.

Rajendra Prasad in 'Problem Posed by Ethics to Advaitism: The Advaitins attempt to solve it Examined' discusses the problems of ethics raised by R. Balasubramanian. This is the first article of its own kind in which the author cum editor has taken the opportunity to examine an article by a contributor. Rajendra Prasad delineates precondition of possibility of ethics and status of the world in Advaitic ontology. I personally do not see any reason behind the composition of this article in the volume.

N. Veezhinathan in 'Ethics in Visistadvaita and Dvaita Philosophy' develops the ethics of Ramanuja and Madhva respectively.

Rajendra Prasad in 'Ethics and Devotion to God (*Bhakti*): Some Problematic Concepts' is an analysis of concepts without contextuality with arbitrary arguments having no historical account and no bibliography.

N.S.S. Raman in 'Ethics in *Bhakti* Philosophical Literature' discusses origin of *Bhakti* and its relation to *karma,* forms of *Bhakti* in the context of ethical, spiritual and social relationships, desanskritization of the *bhakti* movement and its ethical and social significance, caste order and its disintegration, new egalitarian ethics, rejection of *karma* as ritual, emergence of Sikhism and Sufism.

Shubhada Joshi in 'Ethics in *Bhakti* Literature (with Special Reference to Some Maharashtrian Saints' Views)', develops *Varakari Sampradaya* and discusses *Bhakti* as the middle moral path, as *Yajna* and *Svadharma,* as enlightened action for *Lokasamgraha, as dharma* and *rta,* as caste system, women and spirituality.

Pramila Lochan in 'Ethics and Fine Arts in Classical India', elaborates arts and ethics, nature and man, the divine morale, painting, sculpture, music in the golden era (the Gupta period), and finally the cultural renaissance in the post-Gupta period.

V.C. Srivastava in 'Ethics in the Formulation and Application of Law in Classical India (with special reference to the *Smrtis* up to the seventh century AD)', discusses the concept of law in classical India, nature of the *smrtis, dharmasastras,* categories of law, the *purvamimamsa* and Hindu law and ethics, caste perspective of criminal law, evidence, defamation, assault, theft, *sahas, strisangrahana,* gambling and betting, *Brahmana-ksatriya* alliance, civil law, gender ethics and judicial administration.

Brahmananda Gupta in 'Ethics in Classical Indian Medical Theory and Practice', develops general ethics, professional ethics and surgical ethics.

Nirmalaya Narayan Chakraborty in 'Ethics in Indian Attitude Toward Nature: Organic and Inorganic' examines Vedic and Upanishadic ethical attitude toward nature, man and environment in the epics, environmental thinking in Indian philosophical schools, man and nature in *smrtisastra* and *arthasastra* and in the *puranas.*

C.D. Sebastian in 'Interaction between Classical Indian Ethics and Christian Ethics', discusses *Thoma margam* and its early interaction with Buddhism, pluralism in Hinduism, tolerance and communal harmony, caste system, cultural and ritual adaptations, democracy, self-governance and administration of justice, the *gurukul* for priestly training and confession.

S. Shyamkishore Singh in 'Links between Classical Indian and Tribal Ethics', discusses the cosmocentric, i.e *rta* centric ethics in India.

S.A. Shaida in 'Links between Classical Indian and Islamic Ethics', develops Islamic ethics, the Mutazala school, in terms of the unity of Allah, justice, God and his attributes, the eternity of *Qur'an* human freedom, etc. in continuation with the Greek thought specially that of Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics.* He has also examined the interaction between Sufism (gnosis and love), Buddhism and Vedanta (*jnana* and *bhakti*).

Taking into account the conceptual analysis regarding Indian philosophy of morals that the contributors have so painstakingly collected, arranged and presented, they should be congratulated.

The basic contention of each and every contributor has been that Indian ethics is to analysed, examined and vindicated with the help of the texts, facts and figures available in Indian historical milieu and to avoid as far as possible the westernization of these issues. The effort of the contributors in this direction is indeed commendable.

Notwithstanding the merits of the contributors, I would like to point out two fundamental shortcomings of the volume. If the shortcomings of these kinds are attempted to be removed successfully either by the present contributors and the Editor or in the future work of the same kind, posterity will certainly profit from that.

First, the editor and all the contributors of the volume have oversimplified the role of history, culture and civilization, economy, polity, science and technology, .etc. which could be regarded as instrumental for shaping ethos of the society. As far history is concerned, contributors including the editor of the volume have mentioned only the date when a particular text was composed (with reference to certain sources from abroad). Nobody has mentioned the place of *abhyudaya* with its cultural and civilizational backgrounds, social stratification in terms of castes, the economic and political activities, the development of science and technology, etc. After all, moral issues originate out of the cultural milieu, the content and the intent of the specific culture, the universalistic feature of it and its status in the hierarchy of cultures. How to organize the role of culture in shaping the morals and the ethos of the society? Culture is the one people inherit. They have either consciously adopted or uncritically accepted the culture or reflectively revised it in rare cases. Hence human beings are culturally embedded in the sense that they grow up and live within a culturally structured world and organize their lives and social relations in terms of a culturally derived system of meaning and significance.

Since different cultures represent different systems of meaning and visions of the good life, each realizes a limited range of human capacities and emotions and grasps only a part of the totality of human existence. A culture could possibly be evaluated in three ways—Cognitive, Connotive and Normative. The cognitive aspect consists of the world view, the apparent plurality with internal coherence and identity and reflects a continuing conversation between its different traditions and strands of thought. Connotive means acting in certain way within the culture, a way of life with meaning and significance. Normative means judging or evaluating in terms of majority and minority, mainstream and subaltern, high and low, etc. with the view of apprehending the crisis. In a nutshell we can say that culture consists of the aspects of religion/*dharma*, spirituality, philosophy, ethics, aesthetics, archaeology and so on. Can the normative aspect be studied without taking into account the cognitive and the connotive aspects of the culture? As far as historicity is concerned, the contributors have taken into account only the horizontal features without bothering even the least into the teleological aspects.

This fact, however, remains. We come across a situation where not only one or two rather over dozens of important moral concepts with strong place in the texts have been completely ignored. These moral concepts are: Tolerance and resistance, patience and perseverance, peace, fraternity and prosperity, human rights, women's right, care and sacrifice, emotion and anger, guilt, shame and hope, sex and frustration, fantasy and madness, etc.

There are certain terms in the epics like *Mahabharata* which can not be exactly translated into another language and the best way is to have those terms as they are or if possible one may provide nearest cognitive meaning to those terms. For instance, *sthitaprajna* means 'a person with steady wisdom or stable intellect or whose reason is firmly settled,' deriving the meaning from the *prajna* meaning *buddhi* or *bodhi* or reason. Rajendra Prasad has brought out certain horrifying renderings like *sthitaprajna* as 'individual's state of being well seated in the self in him' (p. 142), *Varna* as caste (pp. 125–6), likewise *lokasangrahartham,* etc. However Rajendra Prasad's analytical method has developed out of his understanding/appreciation/adaptation of the logico-linguistic trend in the twentieth century analytic school. As a matter of fact, there is strong logic for analysis/reason of words/sentences (*pada, vakya, pramana,* *i.e. Mimamsa*) in Indian tradition. It is this intellectual horizon within which Rajendra Prasad should have evolved the analytical method in order to analyse *Gita* for that matter Advaita Vedanta.

There are certain concepts like secularism, human rights, etc. which evolved in Europe under certain historical conditions and in the course of time these concepts proliferated beyond Europe to other continents and countries. But these concepts should not be used beyond their meaning and significance. Prahlada Char says, "...except for the Vedanta schools, all other Indian schools of philosophy are fit to be considered as secular" (p. 267). He does not explain his contention behind this allegation. As a matter of fact, the word 'secular' has a very old origin, 'secularization' originated in the seventeenth century and 'secularism' in the nineteenth century. The word 'secular' as an adjective goes back to the Latin culture. It is a Latin word *saecularis* and it comes as an adjective after the word *saeculum* which in pre-Christian Latin meant 'a long period of time' almost something like our *yugam* which means 'world structure' but not the world as 'basically conceived' but as ' time conceived'. Likewise a long period is called saeculum. Then it came to be, *saeculum* meant 'century 'or 'a hundred years'. Already in the time of Julius Caesar that is 44 BC, at the end of every century, they had *saeculum* games, once in a one hundred years, celebrating the century that is passing and welcoming the new century that is coming. But then *saeculum* meant 'belonging to the century'. After the beginning of the Christian era, the word secular takes on a new meaning. It is distinguished from *saecularis* and religious. What does it mean? Religious means 'monastric', i.e. attached to a monastry, i.e. community under a given set of rules. This is the meaning of religious till the eighteenth century. Opposed to it was the word secular.

Then the word 'secularization' came up during sixteenth century. The word was first used in the Peace of Westphalia in Germany in 1648.[1] It was signed by the European nations fighting for the Thirty Year War. The drafters of the Treaty had used the word 'secularization'. What does it mean? It was a period of transition from feudalism to capitalism. In European feudalism, religion had a rigid control over every walk of human life. The ideologues of capitalism propagated the view that 'unless we defeat religion, we can not defeat feudalism'. To defeat religion means to take away the two ways through which religion was having control over the society. These two ways were 'property' and 'ideas'. The first phase was to take away property that belonged to the Catholic Church and to give it to the public. This was known as 'secularization'. Then 'secularization' meant that not only property but also the institutions and the ideas should be taken away from the control of the Church and be given to public openness. That is the way 'secularization' came into being.

Secularism is a peculiar nineteenth century word like all other 'isms' and it has a specific meaning. Around the beginning of nineteenth and twentieth century, a man called G.J. Holiock in England started a view called 'secularism'. It was very popular promoted by some of the highest scientists of the time. What he said is this: 'All the religion belonged to the immature past of humanity. Now we are at the stage of science and positive thought.' In the beginning, it was very popular in England and America. But it collapsed in the thirties. When Hitler came up, people said 'this is what secularism has produced'. There was a reaction against Fascism and in that reaction secularism was also more or less abandoned by a large number of people. Indian secularism is a peculiar thing. In India, we confuse secular, secularization and secularism with one another. At the time of partition, Mr. Jinnah said that Pakistan would be a religious country. In reaction to that, Jawaharlal Nehru said that India would be a secular state. There was no other word available that time as non-religious state or something. Therefore Nehru chose the word 'secular state'. I have no intention of questioning that decision. That was a period of big crisis in which he had to take the decision very quickly and Nehru took over this word for his liberal education. But it moves away from the Western model and makes certain basic principles. One of them is that India as a state is secular but as a nation it is communal. The other principles are—state is not religious and that all religions are equal before the state and so on. Under this conceptual appreciation of secularism, we can say that Prahlad Char's allegation is highly irresponsible.

Likewise R. Balasubramanian has developed Advaita theory of Human Rights (pp. 302–306). As a matter of fact, human rights are as old as human society as such but, historically speaking, the first such instance can be found in the Magna Carta or the great Charter (1215). "Barons in opposition to John (ruled 1199–1216) forced him to put his great seal to this charter on 15 June 1215 at Runnymede, near Windsor. Many of its 63 clauses dealt with the barons' grievances but some were of wider importance, e.g. no freeman was to be punished without a trial and the king could not demand taxes without the Great Council's consent. So important was it that copies, of which four survive, were sent into every shire. Though John repudiated it, the Charter was confirmed by later Kings."[2] It included such rights as church is free from government influences, free citizens including widows can own and inherit property, equality before law, prohibition of bribery, etc. In the course of time and historical developments those rights developed as human rights. After Magna Carta, there came many such accords to substantiate and elaborate the rights of the people; such as, the petition of Rights (1628) and the Bill of Rights (1689). During eighteenth century, the natural rights as legal rights started getting written into national constitution.[3] But the basic question is—what is a Right? The answer to this question is given by Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) in the treatise *Rechtslehre,* "The only original Right, belonging to each man in virtue of his humanity is Freedom ..."[4] "Every action is in accordance with Right which enables the freedom of each man's will to assist side by side with the freedom of every other man, according to an universal law."[5] We can then suppose that when Kant develops freedom as the only original Right of man and proposes to limit that freedom in the case of each individual solely by the demand for an equal freedom on the part of all other individuals, it is evidently clear that for Kant an action would be contrary to Right if it interferes with the formal freedom of one's neighbour. He introduced three maxims which cannot be strange to any culture though they could be naive to every culture, they are universal.

One can easily imagine that the absence of any of these maxims could be tantamount to the denial of human dignity. Therefore these maxims could be regarded as the necessary principles for any study of Human Right.

These maxims have created the broad vision of Human Rights that the UNO seeks to attain in its global mission of peaceful co-existence and mutual development. Even the very title of the draft has been greatly under Kantian influence, i.e. "Universal Declaration of Human Rights". It is a far-reaching document trying to protect Human Rights and to integrate the fabric of national and international life both ethically and juristically. Under this cultural milieu we find that Balasubramanian's contention is very shallow and self defeating.

Besides these shortcomings, the volume has been well thought out and will benefit teachers, students, researchers and all those interested in Indian philosophy of morals. The printing, the jacket design and the over all production of the book is satisfactory.

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